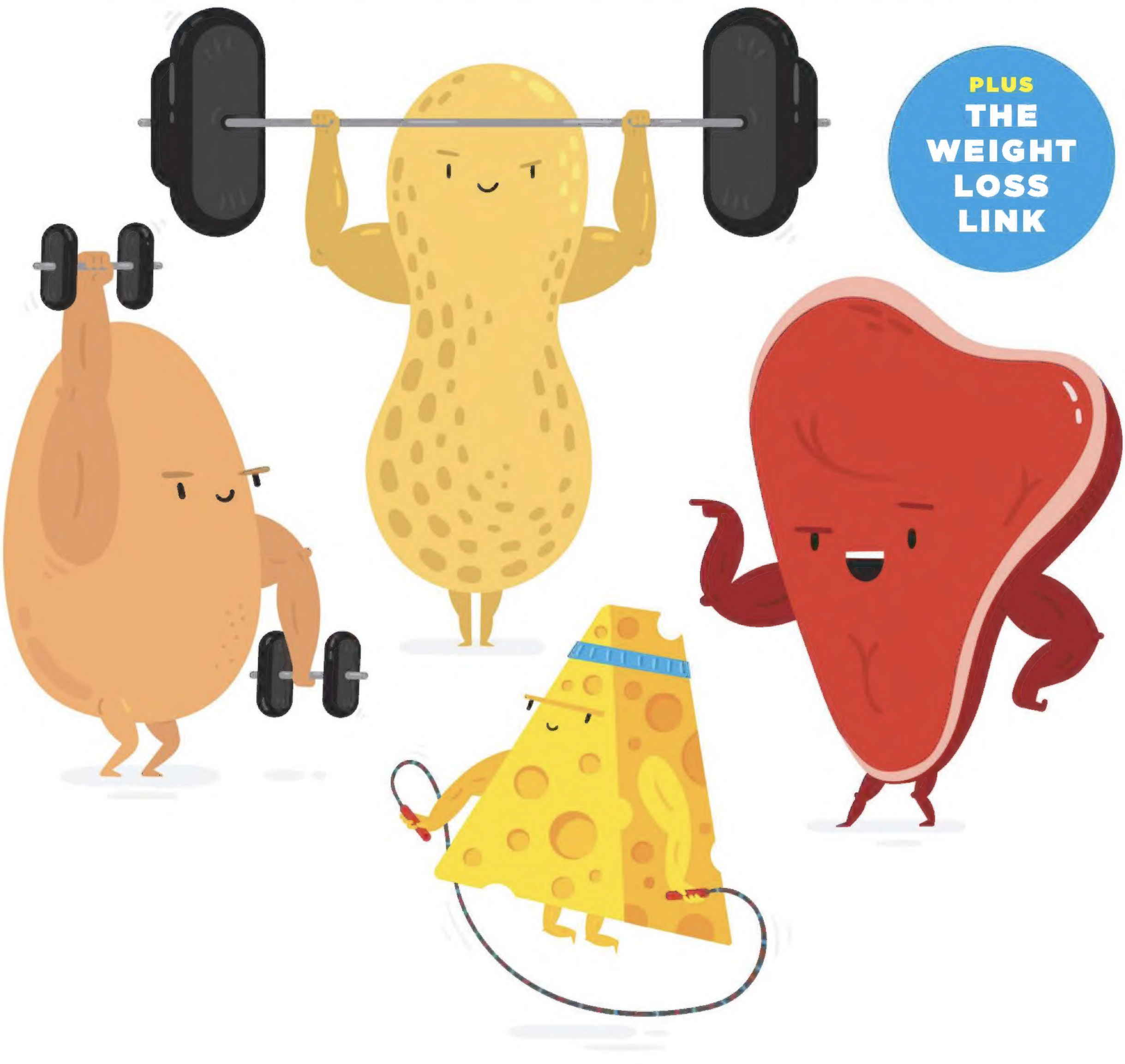
SPECIAL EatingWell EDITION

THE POWER OF PROTEIN

PLANT-BASED SOURCES / **RECIPES FOR EVERY MEAL** / **KNOW THE BENEFITS**



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INTRODUCTION

THE PERFECT AMOUNT OF PROTEIN FOR YOU

If a little protein with each meal is great for building lean muscles, keeping us fuller longer and, well, keeping our bodies functioning, wouldn't eating more protein be even better? Not so fast.

BY HOLLY PEVZNER

Whether they are getting it from a sizzling steak, a plant-based bowl, a packaged snack or even infused water, Americans are obsessed with protein. Fifty-five percent of households make a special point to seek out high-protein foods when grocery shopping, according to a Nielsen report. "I think a big piece of the allure is the idea that protein can help you stay fuller longer and lose weight," says protein researcher Jamie I. Baum, Ph.D., director of the Center for Human Nutrition at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. And it can. Higher-protein meals decrease hunger and increase satiety better than lower-protein meals, confirms a 2018 report in the journal *Nutrients*. Protein takes longer to digest than other eats, and it signals the release of satiety hormones, which can often lead to weight loss or healthy weight maintenance.

There's a difference between high protein and excessive protein, though. "A lot of people believe that the more protein you eat, the better, but that's not necessarily true," says Baum. Think about it like this: if more protein automatically meant better weight management, more lean muscles and improved health, then double cheeseburgers and their 49 grams of protein might be the ultimate health food. Instead, the benefits that arise from consuming protein go beyond quantity. It's about quality. It's about timing. And it's about what else you're eating.

Protein Basics

Protein (which is a chain of amino acids) is what nutritionists like to call a building block, meaning

"protein is part of every cell in the body; no living tissue can be built without it," says Baum. In short: we need protein to live. It builds bones and muscles, forms blood cells, keeps the immune response in check, provides energy, helps repair cells and more. While the body is excellent at churning out most of the amino acids we require, there are nine essential ones that our bodies simply can't make, so we need to get them through food. Animal-based proteins, like meat and dairy, contain good amounts of all essential amino acids. "Soy protein is very close to the same amount, and pulses are also right there," says registered dietitian Sharon Palmer, author of several books, including *California Vegan*. But our bodies are not designed to take what we need from the protein we eat and hoard the rest in reserves for later use. "There definitely seems to be a max amount of protein that you can consume at any one meal that can turn on protein synthesis, which is the process in which cells make proteins," says Douglas Paddon-Jones, Ph.D., a professor of nutrition and metabolism at the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston. And that raises the question: how much protein should we eat?

How Much Protein You Need

The National Academy of Medicine (the minds behind the recommended daily dietary allowance, or RDA) states that most adults get a minimum of 0.8 gram of protein for every kilogram of body weight daily, on average. That's a bit over 7 grams of protein for every 20 pounds you carry. In other words, if you're 150 pounds, that comes to about 55 grams of protein a day. Paddon-Jones, however, doesn't necessarily suggest following this guideline to the number. "These recommendations are for the minimum quantity of protein needed to prevent deficiency. It's not the recommended amount for optimal function," he says.

Settling on an optimum protein recommendation is tricky because protein is a very individual thing. The ideal amount each person needs shifts with factors such as pregnancy status, age, sex, activity level, body composition and general health. For instance, while highly trained athletes may benefit from more than 27 grams of protein per 20 pounds of weight daily, everyday exercisers looking to build muscle likely only need up to 18 grams per 20 pounds daily, according to a 2017 study in the *Journal of the International Society of Sports Nutrition*. And older adults should aim for "69 to 81 grams for a 150-pound person," says Katie Dodd, R.D.N., a geriatric dietitian in Medford, Oregon. While "older adults" usually means age 65 and up, a 2018 report in the journal *Nutrients* suggested that it may be a better idea to include middle-agers as well. The study noted that the current RDA for protein for adults is likely insufficient for muscle mass and strength maintenance for folks older than 40. This is about the time frame when the muscle-aging process begins, making it a good time for implementing dietary changes (aka more protein) to help prevent or delay sarcopenia, which is the loss of muscle mass with age. "If protein is ignored, it can contribute to muscle loss, and then down the road, it'll increase one's risk of falls, hospitalizations and injury from being weak," says Dodd. Bottom line: if you're a relatively healthy adult, think of the RDA as a baseline.

Are We Getting Enough?

On the surface, it sure looks that way. Most healthy adults clock about 90 grams of protein a day, which exceeds the RDA, according to a 2019 study in the *Journal of Nutrition, Health & Aging*. However, the same report found that about 33% of people over age 50 fail to hit the minimum. ("One of the reasons is that some older adults simply eat less all around," says Dodd.) In addition, an earlier report in the *Journal of Nutrition* found that people consume about 40% of their daily protein at dinner. "When you eat all of that protein at once, you're missing out on some of the benefits," says Paddon-Jones, who coauthored the study. His research concluded that consuming a moderate amount of protein three times a day is optimal. That means, in part, don't forget breakfast, which is something that 1 in 10 Americans do, according to the NPD Group, a marketing research company. "If you skip breakfast, you skip a real opportunity to utilize your daily protein properly," says Paddon-Jones. For example, having a high-protein breakfast can lead to improved satiety and reduced snacking, according to research in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. Of course, to best utilize properly timed protein, it's important to choose the right sources.

Some Proteins Are Better Than Others

"In general, to be considered a good source of protein, a whole food should contain around 7 grams," says Palmer. And while, in theory, 7 grams is 7 grams no matter where you get it, not all protein is created equal, even if a 2017 survey found that 69% of folks believe that the source doesn't really matter. "People see protein on the label, and they automatically think 'Oh, this is a good thing,'" says Paddon-Jones. "But there are packaged foods that have some protein sprinkled in, and suddenly it's supposed to be a healthy food. It's not." After all, protein is not delivered by itself. It comes in food, complete with other nutrients—or lack of nutrients.

Take protein bars: "Say your bar claims to

THE PROTEIN PUZZLE

The National Academy of Medicine recommends that adults get a minimum of just over 7 grams of protein for every 20 pounds of body weight. But that's just the minimum to avoid deficiency. Here are some considerations for raising your protein levels.

An Average, Healthy Person: 7 to 12 grams per 20 pounds of body weight

Muscle Building: 12 to 18 grams per 20 pounds of body weight

Vegan: 8 to 10 grams per 20 pounds of body weight

Older Adults: 9 to 11 grams per 20 pounds of body weight

Pregnant Women: 11 grams per 20 pounds of body weight

PROTEIN CONTENT IN COMMON FOODS

3 ounces beef, chicken, turkey, pork or lamb ..... 23 g
3 ounces fish (such as tuna) ..... 23 g
3 ounces tofu ..... 8 g
1 egg ..... 6 g
½ cup lentils ..... 8 g
2 tablespoons peanut butter ..... 7 g
8 ounces milk (whole, skim or 1%) ..... 8 g
5 ounces Greek yogurt, (plain, nonfat or light) ..... 12 to 18 g

have 7 grams of protein, but it's 200 or 300 calories and high in sugar," says Baum. "What are you really gaining from eating it? If you're replacing a candy bar, maybe that's a good thing. But if it's just to get protein, you should think it through a little more." Another source that requires more thought is protein powder. "Isolated plant proteins are fine to include in your diet, but you won't get all the benefits you would if you ate a whole plant food," says Palmer, noting that fiber is important for that right-away full feeling, while protein helps you stay fuller longer. With that, adding a scoop or two of whey protein in your a.m. smoothie is A-OK once in a while for folks who are too time crunched to make eggs or turkey bacon or for those who struggle to get enough protein. And then there are all those plant-based crumbles and burgers. "These can certainly count as a protein serving and are fine to include here and there," says Palmer, who notes that it's still best to focus mostly on whole plant foods for max benefits. "Also, a lot of these products only have 1 or 2 grams of protein per serving, so always read labels."

Are Animal Sources Best?

Up to 85% of America's protein intake comes from animal sources, such as eggs, dairy and meat, according to a 2019 report from the journal *Nutrients*. And that's too much. It's not that animal-based proteins are bad. They're not. "They're actually complete protein sources, meaning they contain all of the essential amino acids we need," says Dodd. It's just that, by and large, Americans are choosing animal-based proteins over alternative and healthy sources of protein, such as seafood, nuts, seeds and soy. And when red meat tops your go-to list, "you really need to look at how much you're eating and the saturated-fat content," says Baum. Regularly eating red and processed meat can increase the risk of type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, stroke and certain cancers.

The American Institute for Cancer Research recommends eating less than 18 ounces of red meat a week. (A serving size of cooked meat or poultry is 3 ounces and about the size of a deck of cards.) When choosing any meat, go for lean or low-fat cuts, like 93% lean ground beef, pork loin and skinless chicken breasts. And be sure to include a variety of nutrient-rich seafood, like salmon and trout, into the mix—almost 90% of Americans don't meet the recommended 8 to 10 ounces of seafood a week. A 3-ounce serving of meat, poultry or fish hovers at around 23 grams of protein; 2 large eggs have 12 grams; and an 8-ounce glass of milk has 8 grams.

Why Plant-Based Proteins Are Important

According to a 2019 report from the International Food Information Council, one-quarter of people were eating more plant-based protein than they were one year earlier. That's great news, especially since a 2020 *BMJ* study found that replacing red meat with high-quality plant-based proteins, such as beans, nuts or soy, appears to reduce one's risk of coronary heart disease. Another study, this one out of Harvard, noted that swapping 5% of animal protein with plant protein is associated with an almost 50% lower risk of mortality. Part of the reason: "Plant protein sources are full of fiber, nutrients, phytochemicals, and they're also low in saturated fat, sodium and preservatives," says Palmer.

Plant-based proteins fill you up just as well as animal sources. Researchers from the University of Copenhagen gave 35 healthy men meals based around fava beans or split peas; pork or veal; and eggs and found zero differences across the meals in terms of hunger, satiety and fullness.

The trick, says Palmer, is ensuring that your plant-based meal is balanced. "You need fiber, fat and protein together, so don't just have the tofu, for example. Have a tofu stir-fry with vegetables and brown rice." Consider adding some of these plant-based proteins to your mix: tofu (8 grams of protein per 3-ounce serving); beans and lentils (6 to 8 grams per ½ cup); soy milk (6 grams per cup); peanut butter (7 grams per 2 tablespoons); and quinoa (8 grams per cup).

Is Too Much Protein an Issue?

If you're at risk for kidney disease or you're dealing with any other kidney issues, too much protein is not a good idea. (Excess can cause waste to build in the blood that's difficult for the kidneys to remove, Baum points out.) Exactly how much is too much for you can be determined by a health care professional.

The bigger health issues come from consuming a lot of red meat and saturated fat, and simply overeating in general. Remember, bodies can't store protein, so once you've sapped its usefulness, the rest converts to either energy or fat. Also, "when you're hyper-focused on protein, you're likely missing out on other important nutrients," says Baum.

Unsure where you're at with your own protein intake? Baum recommends tracking your diet for a week or so to pinpoint your biggest sources and your protein timing. "From there, look for opportunities to increase protein intake from a variety of healthy sources," she says. And don't get too lost in all of the math. Instead, "go meal by meal and spread your healthy proteins throughout the day," says Paddon-Jones. "And if you start, say, eating an egg for breakfast instead of a Pop Tart, then things can only get better." ●

CHAPTER 1

FUEL YOUR HEALTH

Understanding protein—and what foods to find it in—can help you optimize your intake. Here are the research-backed basics.

AN ESSENTIAL NUTRIENT

Proteins are the body's building blocks, and knowing how these macronutrients work can help you make a game plan for meals.

BY EMILY JOSHU

First described by the Dutch chemist Gerardus Johannes Mulder, protein got its name from Swedish chemist Jöns Jacob Berzelius in 1838. The name "protein" is derived from the Greek word for "primary," meaning "in the lead" or "standing in front." Early scientists believed that protein was an essential nutrient for maintaining the body's overall structure, and its importance has been studied for centuries. Protein is one of the major components of a healthy, functional body. "Protein is a macronutrient that every cell in our body needs. Proteins are made up of building blocks called amino acids, and protein is found in every cell throughout our body, so an adequate amount of protein intake is important for keeping our muscles, bones and tissues healthy," says Kristen Smith, M.S., R.D.N., a spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Other macronutrients include carbohydrates and fat.

More than 500 amino acids have been identified in nature, and 20 of them make up the proteins found in the human body. Nine of these are considered "essential," meaning that the body cannot make them by itself, so they need to come from food. These are isoleucine, leucine, valine, methionine, phenylalanine, tryptophan, threonine, histidine and lysine.

Isoleucine, leucine and valine are grouped under the umbrella of branched-chain amino acids (BCAAs), which means they are the only three amino acids that have a chain that branches off to one side. BCAAs represent about 35 to 40% of all essential amino acids in the body, and 14 to 18% can be found in the muscles. BCAAs can help

PROTEIN ACCOUNTS FOR 44% OF THE CALORIES IN ASPARAGUS. PAIR WITH A LEAN MEAT SUCH AS CHICKEN FOR A PROTEIN-RICH MEAL.

the body produce energy during exercise, as well as reduce fatigue during it by lowering the production of serotonin in the brain. A recent study in the journal *Nutrients* found that "chronic BCAA supplementation led to increased performance in rats subjected to a swimming test to exhaustion following moderate-intensity swimming training." BCAAs can also regulate blood sugar levels by helping your cells take in sugar from the bloodstream. Additionally, the amino acid lysine helps produce carnitine, which is responsible for converting fatty acids into energy and lowering cholesterol. Lysine also helps the body absorb calcium and form collagen, which keeps bones, skin, tendons and cartilage strong.

Protein plays a role in many bodily processes, including things such as bone health and digestion. Practically all of the reactions in the body are regulated by enzymes, which are a type of protein. These biological molecules are found within cells, and are almost always in the form of proteins. "Enzymes affect the rate of a physiological process, so they can speed up a reaction in the body," says Jessica Bihuniak, Ph.D., R.D.N., an assistant professor of clinical nutrition in the department of nutrition and food studies at New York University. They do this by reacting with molecules called substrates, which bind to a part of the enzyme referred to as the active site. Reactions caused by enzymes occur significantly faster once the substrates bind to the active site. Some enzymes also help break up large molecules into smaller ones, which can more easily be absorbed by the body. Digestion and energy production are two examples of bodily processes that are influenced by proteins. Enzymes work alongside chemicals in the body, such as stomach acid and bile, to break down food. Enzymes are also responsible for the storage and release of energy.

Bone density is a health consideration that has been linked to protein intake for decades. "In the '80s and '90s, there was a school of thought that dietary protein was bad for bones, so if you ate a lot of especially animal sources of protein, people thought that your bones may be weaker and put you at risk for fracture," Bihuniak says. She worked on a 2015 study in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology*, titled "The Effect of Whey Protein Supplement on Bone Mass in Older Caucasian Adults," that examined the effect of whey protein, which is in dairy products and typically found in powder form. The study found that while there were no present improvements in bone density, there were no negative consequences of dietary protein on the bones. According to Bihuniak, it helps disprove that old hypothesis.

Protein is vital for muscle growth and repair, especially after exercise. "Our body is in a constant state of turnover and growth when it comes to muscular tissue, and we need those individual amino acids to go in there and repair," says Alex Caspero, M.A., R.D., author of *The Plant-Based Baby and Toddler*. "When we have any break in our tissue from exercise, that's when amino acids go in and not only make that muscle stronger, but more capable of increasing next time. That's essentially how you build muscle." However, Caspero adds that contrary to myths, eating protein, such as chicken, is not going to make bulk all on its own.

Complete protein sources contain all nine essential amino acids. These sources include milk, pork, beef, eggs, poultry and fish.

Additionally, protein helps strengthen your body on the outside in the forms of keratin and collagen. Keratin is a protective protein in hair, skin and nails, and it has been shown to make hair smoother and easier to manage. A 2013 study in the journal *BMC Biotechnology*, for example, found that keratin helped hydrate hair fibers, which increased the hair's brightness and softness. Collagen, on the other hand, is considered the most plentiful protein in the body, giving structure to your skin and helping your blood to clot. You can encourage your body to produce collagen by consuming foods with vitamin C, copper (found in organ meats, sesame seeds, cashews and lentils) and proline (found in egg whites, dairy products, cabbage, asparagus and mushrooms).

The biggest difference between animal- and plant-based sources of protein is the presence of "complete" proteins. Complete proteins contain

all nine essential amino acids. They include milk, pork, beef, eggs, poultry and fish. While the majority of these sources are animal products, soy foods, such as tofu, are plant-based alternatives. "Amino acid composition is the biggest thing," Bihuniak says. "Some [animal-based protein sources] tend to be higher in certain amino acids like leucine, which is important for muscle protein synthesis, but you can meet your needs with plant protein sources if you eat a variety." She adds that animal-based proteins can be easier to digest.

For decades, a long-held myth asserted that vegetarians and vegans had to combine specific foods if they wanted to form a complete protein. "When the rise of vegetarianism came out in the '60s and '70s, it was very much commonplace to discuss the idea of combining certain foods. So you had to have a piece of whole-grain bread with peanut butter to get your 'complete' food. You had to eat beans and rice to make a complete protein, and that carried on for a long time," Caspero says. "We recently found out that plant foods do contain all of the essential amino acids. They just contain limiting amounts of some of them." For example, broccoli contains a small amount of the essential amino acid lysine. Though you could get the recommended amount of essential amino acids from eating nothing but broccoli, that's hardly sustainable.

Generally, variety is more effective than zeroing in on one or two particular foods, no matter how much protein is in them. Recent research has also debunked a decades-long idea that vegetarians and vegans have to pair their protein sources in the same meal. "Let's say if we had broccoli in the morning, and then we had black beans for dinner, and black beans are very high in lysine, which within the broccoli is more limited. You're going to be able to get all of the essential lysine that you need just by eating naturally throughout the day," Caspero says.

Smith recommends to "consume a variety throughout the day every week. I think in general with nutrition people get focused on one or two foods that they may think is healthy or that they feel comfortable consuming, and really trying to choose a variety of foods will help with that ultimate balance and nutrition profile." If you eat only one or two plant-based sources of protein, you are likely limiting the amount of essential amino acids that your body needs.

Looking to pack your plate with more protein? It can be found in a variety of sources that you can incorporate into any meal of the day. Three ounces of roasted, skinless chicken breast is a leaner alternative to red meat, and has about 23 grams of protein, for example. The same amount of turkey breast contains similar levels of protein, and it's low in fat. Seafood options include shrimp, tuna, halibut and cod. Non-meat animal-based choices include egg whites and Greek yogurt, which can replace sugary cereals at breakfast.

Plenty of plant-based options can help vegetarians and vegans meet their protein needs. "I think the absolute biggest myth that I hear a lot is that you have to eat animal-based protein in order to get complete proteins," Caspero says. Bihuniak points to lentils, chickpeas, black beans, edamame, tofu, quinoa and nut butters (such as almond and cashew butters). Tofu and edamame are derived from soybeans and are rich in other nutrients, such as iron, calcium, folate, vitamin K and fiber.

Some vegetables, including spinach, brussels sprouts, asparagus, artichokes, potatoes and sweet potatoes, contain small amounts of protein. "Plant-based proteins are not only nutritionally amazing, but they also contain all these other benefits that you're just not going to be able to find in an animal-based protein," Caspero says. "Someone following a plant-based diet can consume adequate essential amino acids when they consume a variety of plant-based protein sources throughout the day. It just takes a bit more planning," Smith says. Spreading out your protein during the day has also been shown to be beneficial for muscle protein synthesis. Smith recommends swapping out a meat-centric meal for a plant-based meal every once and a while to get that variety.

WHILE MANY AMERICANS MAY BE CONCERNED about getting enough protein, they are more likely consuming too much. "If you're including protein with most meals and with some snacks, you're likely consuming an adequate amount," Smith says. Bihuniak adds: "You really have to restrict your diet to not meet your body's protein

needs." The daily amount of dietary protein recommended for adults is 0.8 gram per kilogram of body weight, or just over 7 grams for every 20 pounds of weight. For a 140-pound person, for example, that equals about 50 grams of protein per day. "That number is going to increase the more that you are active. [For] endurance athletes, that might pop up to about 1.2. Maybe the higher end is about 1.5 if you're doing a lot of strength workouts. But I do think that the average person also overestimates how active they are."

Your protein needs can change, however, if you are looking to lose weight. "Eating dietary protein is what we consider to be protein sparing, meaning the idea that when we lose weight, we don't just lose fat," Caspero says. "When we lose weight, we're losing a lot of things in the body, and we lose about 10% of our muscle mass, or protein, as we lose weight."

Eating more protein during active periods, such as around the time you work out, can bu er some of the natural loss that occurs. Higher-protein foods also tend to be more satiating, which means that you are more likely to stay full longer. This can lead to a curbed appetite, resulting in less overeating and potentially weight loss.

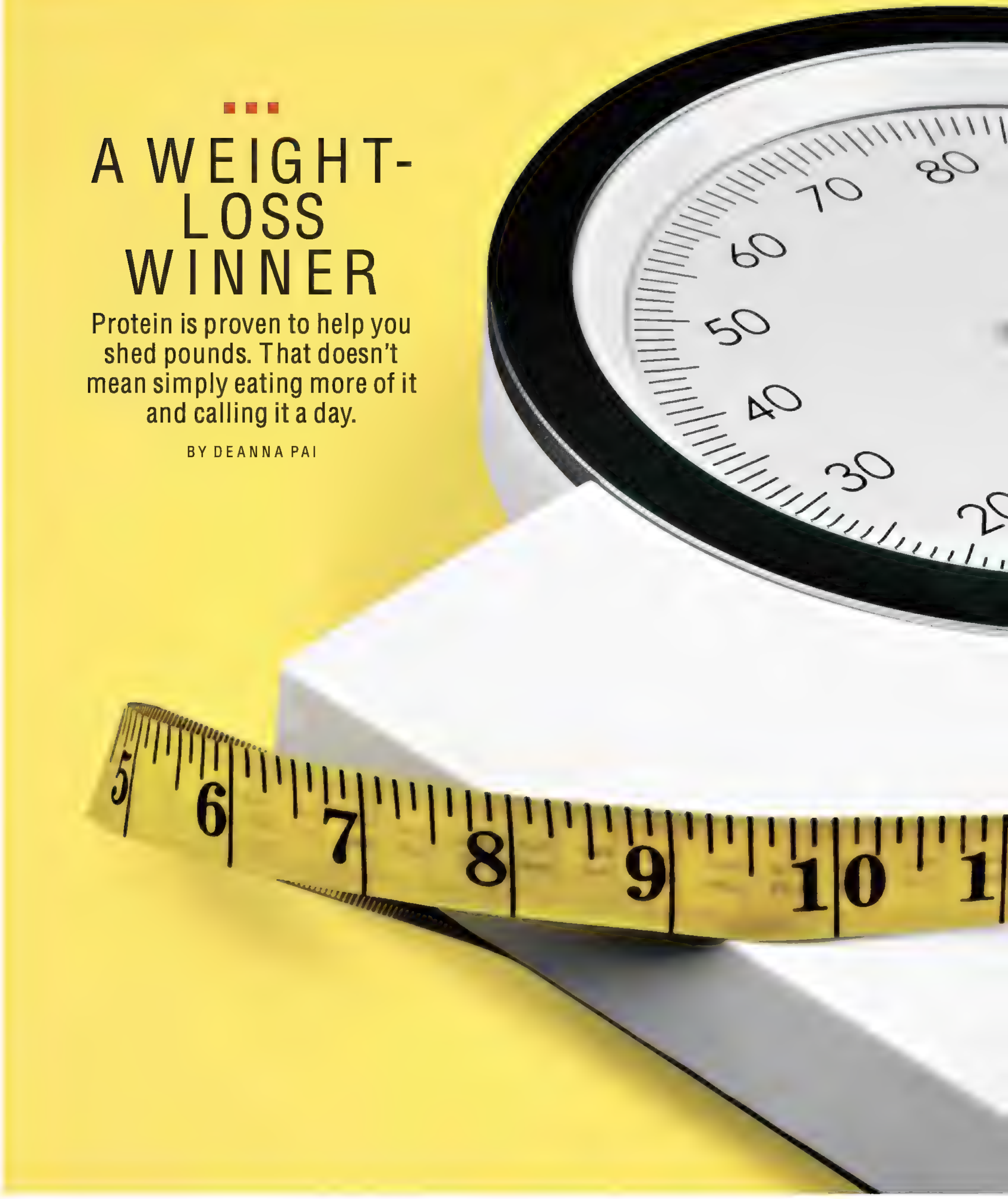
In order to get more sources of healthful protein in your diet, incorporating variety into every meal of the day is essential. If you're looking to increase intake, Smith recommends making sure at least a fourth of your plate includes a protein source, as well as substituting that midday bag of chips with protein-rich snacks, such as nuts, yogurt and cheese. And while many meat sources are considered complete proteins, experts recommend being mindful of the saturated fat found in red meat.

"We don't just eat single nutrients. We eat food," sasy Caspero. "If I'm eating black beans, yes, I'm getting protein. But I'm also getting a lot of insoluble fiber. I'm getting antioxidants. I'm getting other things that are in that food." Many plant-based sources of protein also contain these healthful nutrients, such as fiber and antioxidants. "It's important we consider what else is in the food," she says. 0

A WEIGHT-LOSS WINNER

Protein is proven to help you shed pounds. That doesn't mean simply eating more of it and calling it a day.

BY DEANNA PAI



When it comes to weight loss, protein isn't exactly the most groundbreaking nutrient. Recall, for example, the Atkins diet, the well-known low-carb, high-protein diet on which you could eat bacon and burgers (hold the bun) and still lose weight. And while it was a hot topic as recently as the early 2000s, "the concept actually dates back to the '60s," says Ken Fujioka, M.D., endocrinologist and director of the Nutrition and Metabolic Research Center at the Scripps Clinic in San Diego. "It keeps being recycled because it does work."

Protein's runaway popularity may have started with Atkins, but it certainly didn't end there. It bears a health halo to this day, beloved by dietitians and gym-goers alike for its ability to promote

healthy weight loss. But reaping its many benefits is not as simple—or as straightforward—as filling your plate with steak and eggs.

Let's start with a quick refresher in physiology: proteins are incredibly important just to keep the body running. Amino acids, which are the building blocks of proteins, serve as the precursors for hormones. On top of that, "protein is needed to repair the body," says Fujioka. "Liver cells, kidney cells, bones: they're always breaking down and remodeling. If you don't have protein, you can't do that—so protein is a limiting factor." The current recommended daily allowance of protein is 0.8 gram per kilogram of body weight, so consider that your minimum.

Increasing your protein intake beyond that might be helpful for those looking to shed some pounds as long as it does not mean excess calories. "It can help with weight in that it can balance satiety, or our fullness factor," says Melissa Majumdar, M.S., a registered dietitian at Emory University Hospital and a spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. While calorie restriction is typically required for weight loss, loading up on protein-rich foods can help you feel satisfied (and therefore less hungry) even within those caloric constraints.

This relates to hormones, which can trigger the body's cues for both hunger and fullness. "When we eat a meal and it gets into our small intestines, we release hormones to tell us to stop eating—and protein is the best at [making us feel full]," explains Fujioka. To be specific, protein is better as a satiety signal than its fellow macronutrients, fat and carbohydrates.

Moreover, that fullness factor isn't fleeting.

"Studies show that it's both with a single meal—so if your meal contained protein, then it would create more fullness—but also a 24-hour period," says Majumdar. "So, over the course of the day, if there was more protein incorporated, that can control hunger better."

Then there's the fact that protein is a key player for creating muscle mass. "Whenever we lose weight, we naturally lose some of our lean muscle mass, and protein can help preserve that," says Majumdar.

Its role in this respect becomes more important with each passing year. "Your body is constantly turning over these tissues," says Kristen M. Beavers, Ph.D., an assistant professor of health and exercise science at Wake Forest University. The rate of turnover fluctuates over your lifetime. Early on, you build more muscle mass than you lose. Once you hit your 30s and 40s, you're breaking even. After that, there's a loss of roughly 1 to 2% a year.

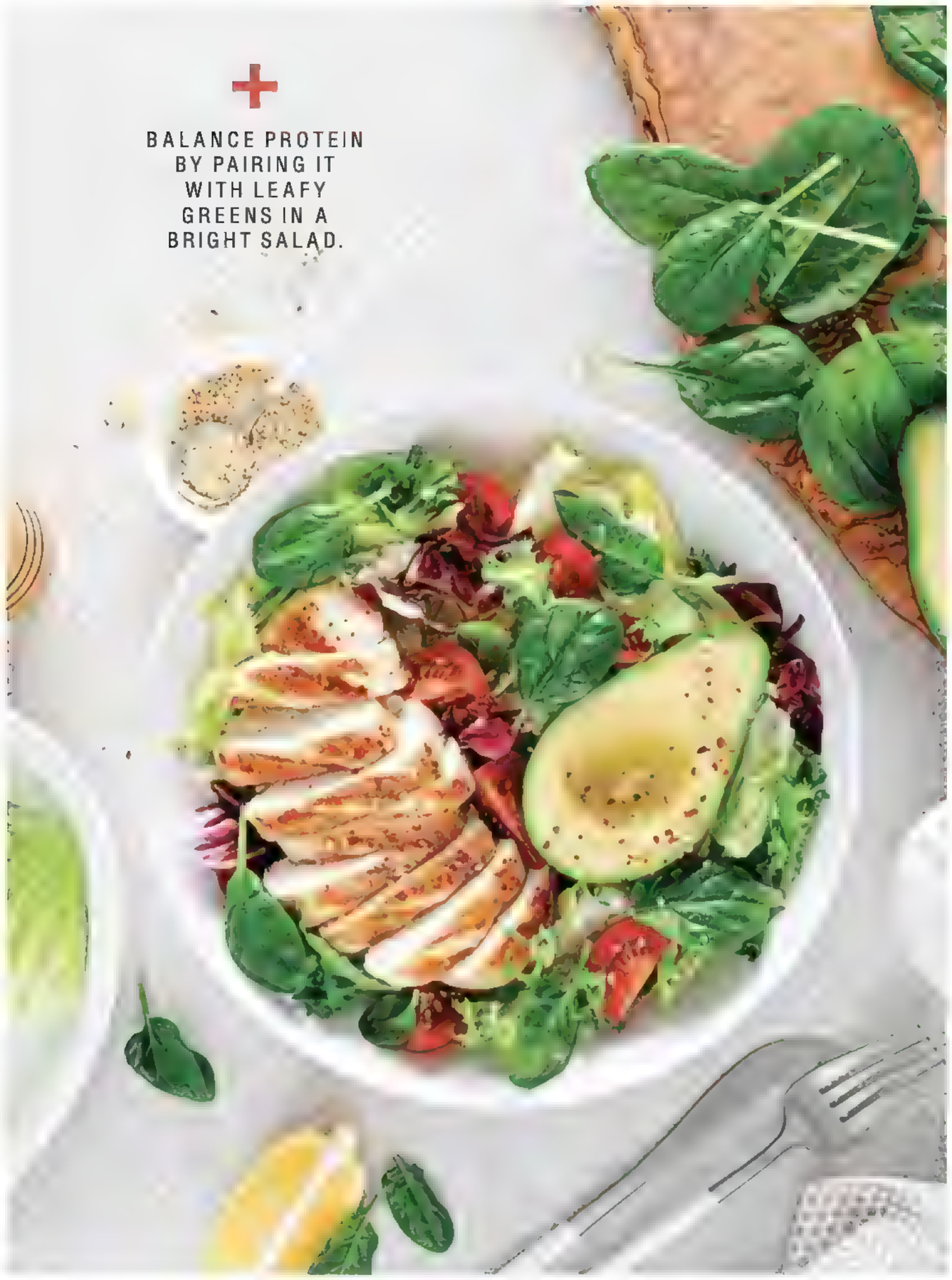
"One of the concerns we have with recommending weight loss for older adults is that when people lose weight, they want to lose fat—but some of what you lose is muscle and bone," says Beavers. That could potentially lead to functional decline, increase the risk of disability and fracture, and promote all-around fragility. The goal, then, is to lose weight without sacrificing muscle and bone health, and a high-protein diet is a simple way to make that happen.

Finally, another reason protein is so helpful is that your body actually burns calories as it breaks down protein in your gastrointestinal tract, via a process called diet-induced thermogenesis. The process of digesting protein gives your metabolism a slight bump, which is why the "meat sweats" can happen in people who consume a ton of protein (namely, athletes). That said, "it's just an incidental benefit," says Fujioka. The little metabolic boost likely isn't enough to o set the calories you're taking in by eating protein—but it's still there.

A protein-heavy diet comes with certain considerations, however. First, not everyone needs more protein; the standard American diet contains enough as it is, says Majumdar. And it's helpful to check with your doctor or a registered dietitian before drastically increasing your protein intake, since it's not ideal for people with certain medical conditions. "Some individuals should not drive up their protein intake a lot, such as somebody with liver disease or kidney disease, or a fairly advanced type 2 diabetes," says Fujioka. "Those individuals have to be very careful."

Beyond that, one of the biggest (and best-known) concerns is that animal sources of protein, such as beef and pork, can come with saturated fat. And a high intake of saturated fat can increase your risk for heart disease, as well as weight gain. "If you see a lot of fat, particularly saturated fats, you can run into problems," says Fujioka. "Protein, unfortunately, oftentimes comes with a lot of fat, and so patients really do want to pick either better fat sources or leaner forms of protein." He's a fan of chicken and fish, tofu, eggs, and rice and beans—a pairing, he says, that will "get you all of the essential amino acids."

Beans, seeds, nuts and soy are also all good sources of protein. Unlike most other plant-based proteins, soy contains high amounts of the essential amino acids. Soy-based foods are



Get Lifting

Weight training is an easy way to retain muscle mass as you're losing weight. A study in *Nutrition Journal* found that combining resistance training and a high-protein diet led to weight loss as well as to an increase in fat-free mass, or musculoskeletal mass. Not only does this combination help reduce body fat, but it simultaneously replaces that fat with healthy muscle.

Keep It in Balance

"We're not eating just protein," says Majumdar. "So is it the protein that made you full, or is it that you had a balance of whole grains, protein, fruits and vegetables?" Other nutrients on your plate o er their own benefits for weight loss, partly by impacting your fullness factor. "We know that fat empties slowly and that fiber does also," she says. For this reason, it's a good idea to balance protein with other nutrients.

also highly praised by our experts. "There are a lot of people who are down on [soy] because they're worried about the phytoestrogens [being linked to certain cancers], but the data for that is extremely weak," says Fujioka. "When you look at countries that have high soybean diets, they actually do well and actually have lower rates of breast cancer."

Eating more protein for the purpose of weight loss works best under certain conditions. A 2020 study published in *Advances in Nutrition* found that people primarily benefit from a higher protein intake when they're also cutting calories and exercising. Simply adding more protein to your diet and calling it a day won't deliver the weight loss you're looking for. With that in mind, here's how to do it right.

Stick with It

Eating seven hard-boiled eggs a day probably won't bring you much joy—or long-term success, says Majumdar. Any successful diet is one that you can stick to on a long-term basis. And it doesn't have to be a calorie-restricted, high-protein diet. To lose weight, says Majumdar, "there's also good evidence to support the DASH diet with calorie restriction, which is one that's used for hypertension. There's evidence to support a Mediterranean diet, which is high in your healthy fats, like olive oil." Although both of these diets highlight fresh fruits and vegetables, these eating plans also contain plenty of protein from sources such as beans, lentils, seafood and lean meats such as chicken. You'll have no problem hitting a standard protein goal, but these diets o er a little more flexibility. 0

The Scoop on Protein Powder

Adding a spoonful into a pancake mix or smoothie sounds like an easy way to help fill you up. But before you add it, here's what you need to know.

BY DEANNA PAI

The inevitable result of protein's star power has been the long and steady rise of protein supplements, such as shakes, bars and powders, that allow you to get the max amount of protein in a more convenient format. These products come with some benefits, especially in terms of ease. According to Ken Fujioka, M.D., the advantage of protein products is that they take a lot of the decision-making out of the consumer's hands.

This can make a di erence in how well one sticks to a given diet. "A lot of us are challenged by meal-planning, meal-prepping and all of the time and commitment that food creates," says Melissa Majumdar, M.S. "For people who have gone on multiple diets throughout their life, it can be very overwhelming to make those food decisions of 'What do I eat?"

Among the older population, protein supplements may be recommended. A study in the *Annals of Nutrition and Metabolism* found that seniors who stuck to a daily diet consisting of four meal replacements, two meals with lean protein and vegetables, and a snack lost fat and retained muscle mass. "If you want to make sure they're meeting their protein needs, it's a lot easier to ensure that happens when you use a meal-replacement product," says Kristen M. Beavers, Ph.D., who was a lead author of the study.

For everyone else, though, powders shouldn't be your primary protein. "The downside is just, Are they a good source of protein?" says Fujioka. A good source is one that contains essential amino acids, most of which are found in food. But it can be hard just to tell from a supplement's packaging or an ingredient list what, exactly, the composition is—especially since they can be highly processed.

Not only that, but many protein supplements tend to be plant-based. While that certainly has merits, recent research has found that, in terms of protein, animal sources are superior to certain plant sources—in this case, wheat and soy—for maintaining muscle health.

For those aiming to lose weight, the best bet is to consider supplements, well, supplements. "We tell patients, 'Look, you can do protein shakes or protein bars for breakfast, but do at least one meal with a standard, high-quality protein so that you don't have to worry about missing the amino acids [that may be lacking] in the shake or bar,'" says Fujioka. A balance ensures you get all the protein you need to stay healthy. O

THE MIGHTY EGG

Loaded with nutrients—some of them hard to come by from other food sources—eggs pack a healthy and protein-rich punch.

RACHEL ROSZMANN; NUTRITION REVIEW BY LISA VALENTE, M.S., R.D.

For breakfast, lunch or dinner, eggs can make meals that are not only easy and affordable but also good for you. Yet conventional wisdom suggests eggs should be eaten sparingly. There's been a lot of conflicting information about whether eggs are good for you. We're breaking a few eggs to explain their benefits.

Complete Protein

Eggs are more than a good source of protein; they're considered a complete protein. They contain all of the nine essential amino acids that our bodies need but can't produce. That's what makes them a high-quality protein.

Protein is the foundation for all the body's functions: it helps make hair, build muscles, strengthen bones and produce enzymes and hormones. In all, one large egg has 6 grams of protein, and the recommended daily allowance for adults is 46 to 71 grams, depending on your age and physical state.

To figure out how much protein you need in a day (along with other macronutrients, vitamins and minerals), you can use an online calculator. It uses your height, weight, age and activity levels to tell you how much of each nutrient you need in a day.

Cholesterol

Eggs' reputation as healthy has been sullied in the past few decades because of their high cholesterol content. To give you some perspective, the same large egg that provides all those essential amino acids also delivers 207 milligrams of cholesterol (mostly from the yolk). If you're watching your cholesterol, that number might blow your mind,

but there are some things to consider about the cholesterol in eggs.

LDLs and HDLs

Cholesterol helps us digest, make hormones and produce vitamin D. Your liver makes cholesterol, but you also get it from meat and dairy (dietary cholesterol). That said, understanding the two types—LDL and HDL—may help you figure out how to get the most out of your eggs:

Low-density lipoproteins (LDLs) are known as "bad" cholesterol. LDLs carry the cholesterol out of the liver and into the bloodstream. They're responsible for the plaque that clogs arteries. High-density lipoproteins (HDLs) are known as "good" cholesterol. HDLs clean up after the bad cholesterol. That means HDLs help lower LDLs.

Over the past few decades, there have been dozens of studies about cholesterol and eggs and the most recent research suggests that eating eggs as part of a healthy diet does not increase the risk of heart problems. The recommendation to limit dietary cholesterol to 300 milligrams a day was removed from the 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans because there wasn't enough evidence to support the theory that dietary cholesterol contributes to cardiovascular disease risk. You can avoid most of the cholesterol by eating just the egg whites, but you'd be missing out on a lot of the nutrients found in the yolk.

Most people can eat eggs and not worry about the cholesterol in them. If you have high cholesterol or you're worried about heart disease, talk to your doctor about how many eggs you eat to get more personalized medical advice.

Vitamin B_{12}

Eggs are a good source of vitamin B_{12}. Your body uses B_{12} in the production of DNA and red blood cells as well as to keep your nerves functioning properly. Most people get enough B_{12}, but people who follow a vegetarian diet may have low levels, and eating eggs can help.

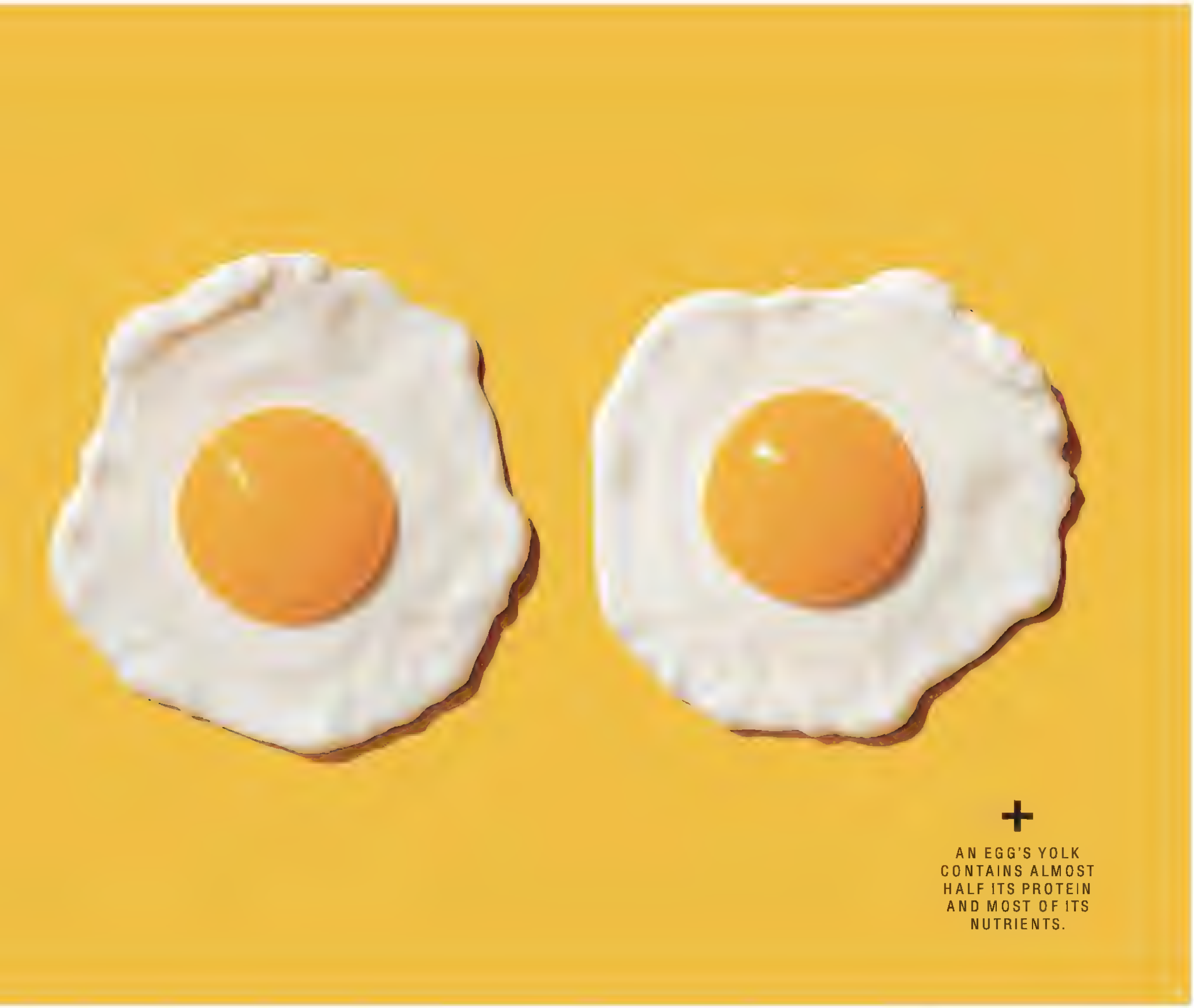
Choline

Eggs are an excellent source of choline. If you're not familiar with choline, know that it does a body good from head to toe. It's important for your memory, mood, muscle control and the maintenance of the nervous system. Your body doesn't make quite as much choline as it needs, but one egg contains 30% of the recommended daily value.

Diabetes

If you're looking for new ideas for what to eat when you have diabetes, you might want to add eggs to your menu. Several studies indicate that eggs may help with type 2 diabetes.

One study published in the journal *Nutrition Research and Practice* found that eating one egg per day was associated with a lower risk of



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AN EGG'S YOLK CONTAINS ALMOST HALF ITS PROTEIN AND MOST OF ITS NUTRIENTS.

developing type 2 diabetes in men.

Another study showed that eating a high-fat, low-carb breakfast, including omelets, may help control blood sugar levels throughout the day. Researchers say people with type 2 diabetes typically get the highest blood sugar spike after breakfast, and the egg breakfast seemed to prevent it.

Vision

Eggs may be good for eye health. Egg yolks contain the carotenoids lutein and zeaxanthin. These nutrients are also typically found in colorful vegetables, and they accumulate in the eye.

Studies show you may lower your risk of age-related vision loss if you get more lutein and zeaxanthin in your diet.

Bottom Line

Eggs contain a lot of nutrients that our bodies need in order to stay healthy. There may be some downsides to eating too many eggs (truly, there are downsides to eating too much of any one food), but if you eat eggs in moderation and incorporate them into a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, you can benefit from them. They're a good (and cheap) source of protein and many other essential nutrients. 0

EGGS TO START YOUR DAY

These delicious egg-based breakfast recipes are perfect for weekend brunch or preppable for busy weekday mornings.

Bacon & Egg Breakfast Tacos

ACTIVE: 35 min TOTAL: 1 hr 35 min

Breakfast tacos are quintessential morning eats in Austin, Texas, but with this breakfast taco recipe, you can enjoy them wherever you are. The smoky, earthy ancho chile salsa is what makes these extra special, though for a quicker weekday breakfast, feel free to swap in your favorite store-bought salsa.

- 2 dried ancho chiles (about 1 ounce)
- 2½ cups boiling water
- 8 ounces scallions, trimmed, plus more for garnish
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- ½ teaspoon salt, divided
- ½ teaspoon ground pepper, divided
- 6 large eggs
- 3 slices thick-cut bacon, chopped
- ¾ cup shredded cheese, such as Monterey Jack
- 6 corn or flour tortillas, warmed
- Shredded red cabbage & lime wedges for serving

1. Place chiles in a heatproof bowl and cover with boiling water. Cover and let stand until softened, about 1 hour.
2. Separate scallion whites and greens and cut into 4-inch pieces. Heat a large cast-iron skillet over high heat. Cook the whites, turning occasionally, until almost entirely blackened, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a plate. Cook the greens until lightly charred, 1 to 2 minutes. Transfer to the plate and let cool.
3. Drain the chiles, reserving the water. Remove and discard the stems and seeds. Transfer the chiles to a food processor and add ¼ cup of the reserved water, the scallions, lime juice and ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper. Puree until smooth.
4. Whisk eggs with the remaining ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper in a medium bowl.
5. Wipe out the pan to remove any blackened bits. Add bacon and cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until just starting to brown, 2 to 5 minutes. Add the eggs and cook, stirring, until just set, 1 to 3 minutes. Remove from heat. Sprinkle the eggs with cheese and cover until it melts, 1 to 3 minutes.
6. Divide the eggs among tortillas. Serve topped with the salsa and more scallions, cabbage and lime wedges, if desired.

SERVES 6: 1 TACO EACH
CAL 226 FAT 12G (SAT 5G) CHOL 200MG CARBS 17G TOTAL SUGARS 1G (ADDED 0G) PROTEIN 15G FIBER 4G SODIUM 444MG POTASSIUM 370MG

Spinach & Egg Sweet Potato Toast

ACTIVE: 10 min TOTAL: 20 min

Skip the gluten and get some vitamin C with this healthy sweet potato toast recipe. Topped with spinach, egg and a dash of hot sauce, it's a delicious alternative to eggs Benedict.

- **1 large slice sweet potato (¼ inch thick)**
- **⅓ cup cooked spinach**
- **1 large egg, fried or poached**
- **½ teaspoon sliced fresh chives**
- **½ teaspoon hot sauce**

Toast sweet potato in a toaster or toaster oven until just cooked through and starting to brown, 12 to 15 minutes. Top with spinach, egg, chives and hot sauce.

SERVES 1: 1 TOAST
CAL 124 FAT 5G (SAT 2G) CHOL 186MG CARBS 12G TOTAL SUGARS 3G (ADDED 0G) PROTEIN 9G FIBER 3G SODIUM 190MG POTASSIUM 556MG

Cauliflower & Kale Frittata

ACTIVE: 45 min
TOTAL: 45 min

Inspired by traditional Spanish tortillas made with potatoes, this healthy frittata recipe swaps potatoes for low-carb cauliflower. Serve it with kale (or your favorite greens) for brunch or for an easy breakfast-for-dinner.

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 small onion, sliced
- 2 cups small cauliflower florets
- ¼ cup water
- 5 cups chopped kale
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
- ½ teaspoon salt, divided
- ½ teaspoon ground pepper, divided
- 8 large eggs
- ½ teaspoon smoked paprika
- ½ cup crumbled goat cheese or shredded Manchego cheese

1. Position a rack in upper third of oven; preheat broiler to high.
2. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large cast-iron skillet over medium heat. Add onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until starting to brown, 2 to 4 minutes. Add cauliflower and water. Cover and cook until just tender, about 6 minutes. Add kale, garlic, thyme and ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper; cook, stirring often, until the kale is wilted, 2 to 3 minutes.
3. Whisk eggs, paprika and the remaining ¼ teaspoon salt and pepper in a large bowl. Add the vegetables to the egg mixture; gently stir to combine. Wipe the pan clean; add the remaining 1 tablespoon oil and heat over medium heat. Pour in the egg mixture and top with cheese. Cover and cook until the edges are set and the bottom is brown, 4 to 5 minutes.
4. Transfer the pan to the oven and broil until the top of the frittata is just cooked, 2 to 3 minutes.

SERVES 4: ¼ FRITTATA EACH
CAL 293 FAT 21G (SAT 7G)
CHOL 383MG CARBS 8G
TOTAL SUGARS 3G (ADDED 0G)
PROTEIN 18G FIBER 2G
SODIUM 517MG POTASSIUM 465MG

10-Minute Spinach Omelet

ACTIVE: 10 min TOTAL: 10 min

Pull together a nutritious breakfast in just 10 minutes with this delicious spinach omelet recipe. Eggs and cheese pack it with protein, while fresh dill boosts the flavor.

- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup spinach
- 2 tablespoons shredded Cheddar cheese
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh dill

1. Whisk eggs in a small bowl. Heat oil in a small skillet over medium-high heat, tilting to coat the pan. Pour in the eggs and immediately stir with a rubber spatula or fork for 5 to 10 seconds. Push the cooked portions at the edge toward the center, tilting the pan to allow uncooked egg to fill in around the edges. Continue to cook until almost set and the bottom is lightly golden, about 1 minute total.

2. Remove from heat and top half the omelet with spinach and Cheddar. Fold the other half over the filling. Slide the omelet onto a plate and sprinkle dill on top.

SERVES 1: 1 OMELET
CAL 255 FAT 19G (SAT 6G) CHOL 86MG
CARBS 3G TOTAL SUGARS 0G
(ADDED 0G) PROTEIN 17G FIBER 1G
SODIUM 278MG POTASSIUM 150MG

Bacon & Kale Sheet-Pan Eggs

ACTIVE: 10 min TOTAL: 35 min

Our trick for making a big batch of eggs? Get out your sheet pan. With this simple recipe, you can easily meal-prep breakfast for the week. Serve them as is or in a sandwich. A sprinkling of za'atar—a Middle Eastern spice blend that's a mix of thyme, sumac, salt, sesame seeds and sometimes other herbs—adds big, bold flavor to these frittata-like squares.

- 18 large eggs
- ¼ cup reduced-fat milk
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon ground pepper
- 1 cup chopped kale
- ½ cup chopped rinsed roasted red peppers
- ¾ cup crumbled feta cheese
- 3 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled
- 1 tablespoon za'atar seasoning

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Generously coat a large rimmed baking sheet with cooking spray.
2. Whisk eggs with milk, salt and pepper. Pour the egg mixture into the prepared pan and top with kale, roasted red peppers, feta, bacon and za'atar.
3. Bake until just set, 20 to 25 minutes. Cut into 9 slices.

SERVES 9: 1 SLICE EACH
CAL 218 **FAT** 14G (SAT 5G)
CHOL 387MG **CARBS** 5G
TOTAL SUGARS 1G (ADDED 0G)
PROTEIN 16G **FIBER** 0G
SODIUM 548MG **POTASSIUM** 183MG

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CHEDDAR CHEESE IS RICH IN PROTEIN, CALCIUM AND VITAMIN K.

10 MEATLESS PROTEIN SOURCES

When you're looking for a high-protein food to eat, these healthy options all deliver more than 6 grams.

LISA VALENTE, M.S., R.D.

Protein is hot-hot-hot right now. Protein is a building block for muscle, as well as hormones and enzymes in our bodies. Beauty bonus: protein helps our bodies grow healthy hair and nails and keeps skin looking good too.

Foods high in protein are very filling because the nutrient takes longer to digest and doesn't cause blood sugar spikes, like simple carbs do. Most of us are eating enough protein, but we don't always space it out during the day. Many of us eat a majority of our protein at dinner and not too much at breakfast and via snacks. Plus, many amazing vegetarian and vegan proteins often get overlooked when people think of protein. We tried to choose foods that you may not think of as "protein" to show you how easy it can be to eat more protein.

1. Black Beans

½ cup = 8 grams of protein

Black beans—or any beans, really—are often overlooked as a protein source. But whether you use them as taco filling, stir them into soup or whir them into dips, beans are a great source of protein. Half a cup of cooked lentils has 9 grams of protein, and chickpeas and kidney beans aren't far behind. Beans o er a protein-fiber one-two punch, and since most of us aren't eating enough fiber, eating more beans is a good place to start. Try dry-roasted chickpeas to get your protein on the go.

2. Tofu

3 ounces = 8 grams of protein

Tofu is a vegan and vegetarian powerhouse protein. If you think you don't like tofu, it's possible you just haven't made it the right way. Tofu is a very

versatile protein-think of it like chicken, a blank slate. Silken tofu is great in smoothies, and firm tofu adds protein to stir-fries and soups.

3. Cheddar Cheese

1 ounce = 6.5 grams of protein

An ounce of cheese just edges out an egg with its protein content. Cheese has gotten a bad rap for being high in saturated fat and sodium, but it turns out that cheese is healthier than we used to think. It makes a great snack on its own (or as part of an awesome cheese board).

4. Almonds

¼ cup = 7 grams of protein

Almonds have been shunned for being high in fat (they are, but it's the heart-healthy kind that's good for you and helps keep you full), but this nut is also rich in protein. Try slivered almonds on top of your salad, or spread nut butter on your toast.

5. Chickpea Pasta

2 ounces = 14 grams of protein

We don't often think of a bowl of pasta as protein-rich, but new bean pastas are changing that. (Barilla is even making a red lentil pasta that's protein-packed and tasty.) These relatively new noodles use bean flours instead of semolina to give you a meal that's packed with protein and fiber. Chickpea pasta doesn't taste quite the same as regular pasta—the texture is a little heartier and you can tell it's made from beans—but with a yummy sauce, it makes a tasty dinner.

6. Greek Yogurt

1 cup = 23 grams of protein

Greek yogurt is higher in protein than regular versions, and it delivers a lot more protein than an egg. Probiotic-rich yogurt is excellent at breakfast—try a parfait with berries and granola, or add it to a smoothie.

7. Peanut Butter

2 tablespoons = 7 grams of protein

Humble and classic, peanut butter does more than make up half of a PB&J sandwich. It delivers a nice boost of protein to toast, noodles, smoothies and oatmeal. For a protein-rich snack, spread peanut butter on apple slices or celery sticks.

8. Sprouted-Grain Bread

2 slices = 8 grams of protein

Most of us don't think of bread as a protein source, but it does have a

bit. Some whole-wheat breads have 3 to 5 grams per slice, and if you make a sandwich on sprouted-grain bread, you'll get 8 grams (and that's not including any of the fillings). Sprouting grains helps their natural sweetness and nuttiness come out, and the texture of sprouted-grain bread is pretty hearty. Look for these breads in the freezer aisle at your grocery store, since they're sometimes kept there to maintain freshness.

9. Quinoa

1 cup cooked quinoa = 8 grams of protein

This protein-rich whole grain delivers 8 grams of protein per cup. Quinoa is also a rare complete plant-based protein, which means that it provides all the essential amino acids. Not to mention, quinoa delivers 5 grams of fiber per cup and cooks quickly.

10. Pumpkin Seeds

1 ounce = 9 grams of protein

Pumpkin seeds, or pepitas, are protein-rich. Snack on them on their own or add them to mu ns, trail mixes and quick breads. Pumpkin seeds also deliver zinc, which supports the immune system, and magnesium, a mineral that helps keep your heart healthy. O

Fuel Your Fitness

Getting a great workout goes beyond the number of reps you do. What you put into your body before and after can make a di erence.

BY BRIERLEY HORTON, M.S., R.D., AND JESSICA BALL, M.S., R.D.

BEFORE YOUR WORKOUT

It's important to fuel up on easy-to-digest carbs, plus a little protein and fat if you are going to be moving for a long time. If you have a meal within two hours of starting your workout and you don't feel hungry, you are probably good to go. If you need a pre-workout boost, try having a small snack that's mostly simple carbs (think ½ English muffin with a tiny bit of peanut butter or half a banana) about 60 minutes prior to exercise to keep your energy up all workout long.

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DURING YOUR WORKOUT

During short bouts of exercise (less than a half hour), it usually isn't necessary to take in any fuel. However, for longer stretches of movement, fueling can be really important. Along with staying hydrated, certain foods can keep your electrolytes in check and keep your muscles moving the way you want.

To boost your energy during endurance activities, recent research suggests that carbohydrate blends (foods containing fructose and glucose) may be superior to straight glucose. But before you reach for a sports drink, consider honey: like sugar, it naturally has equal parts fructose and glucose, but it also contains a handful of antioxidants and vitamins. (The darker the honey, the more disease-fighting compounds it contains.) If you are going to be on the go for a while and need something portable (say, for a long-distance run), go for the single-use packets of honey, sold at most major grocery stores. This will allow you to take your fuel on the go without having to spend the money on expensive sports gels.

For most of us, plain water is plenty to keep us hydrated (except during a very long or intense bout of exercise). More often than not, you do not need to splurge on sports drinks or coconut water. Try drinking 7 to 10 ounces for every 20 minutes of exercise, per the American Council on Exercise. However, if plain water doesn't do it for you, drinking flavored water while you're working out might make it easier to stay hydrated. In one study, people given flavored water while exercising drank more than exercisers given plain water. Choose wisely, though: some brands deliver as much added sugars as soft drinks, while others use artificial sweeteners to cut the calorie load.

POST-WORKOUT

The hard part is over: you have finished your workout. But that is not where performance stops. Recovery eating is important for moving toward your goal and even for warding off soreness and inflammation. After a workout, be sure to replenish

with a mix of protein and carbs. For optimal recovery, enjoy a snack, like Greek yogurt, hummus and vegetables or turkey and cheese slices with bread or crackers, within 30 minutes of ending your workout. When you are able, opt for whole foods over highly processed protein bars and shakes. Contrary to popular belief, your muscles repair themselves and grow during recovery, not during exercise. So even if you have a post-workout snack, aim to have a full meal with vegetables, whole grains, a healthy fat and a lean protein within two hours to sustain your energy and help your muscles rebuild.

If your workout lasts an hour or more, have a glass of milk or chocolate milk. The carbohydrates in it will help replenish the energy stored in your muscles (called glycogen stores) and aid in muscle recovery—more so than a carb-only drink. Don't like milk? Substitute with a post-workout snack of a banana and peanut butter or Greek yogurt.

If you are really looking to focus on recovery, tart cherry juice may be a good option. It delivers antioxidants that mop up the harmful free radicals produced when you exercise. And research shows that a daily dose of cherry juice may help ease inflammation that causes sore muscles. A 2010 study in the *Journal of the International Society of Sports Nutrition* found that runners who downed 24 ounces of tart cherry juice (about 480 calories) for seven days before a long-distance race and again on race day reported fewer aches afterward than runners who drank a placebo. Skip the juice right before or while you're exercising, though: fructose, the primary sugar in fruit, takes longer to digest than other sugars.

CHAPTER 2

SOURCING SMARTS

An intentional approach while food shopping can allow you to enjoy your protein while also easing up on the environment.

ARE GREENER PASTURES AHEAD?

While global researchers urge you to limit beef consumption, scientists and farmers propose a di erent future for your burger.

BY JONATHAN KAUFFMAN

In January 2019, 37 scientists in the EAT-Lancet Commission shocked the world when they published a set of diet guidelines for everyone on Earth in order to feed our growing population while keeping climate change in check. The international panel based its recommendations on thousands of research studies covering factors like the amount of arable land on Earth and the nutrients humans need to stay healthy.

Half of our meal should always be fruits and vegetables, the commission's Planetary Health Diet guidelines advised. But that's not what raised eyebrows, particularly in the United States. Earthlings, they said, should eat 14 grams of red meat per day—in other words, one 3½-ounce slice of beef, lamb or pork per week. That's smaller than a quarter-pound burger! The average American would have to cut his or her red-meat consumption by 90%.

As climate change becomes something many Americans experience in their daily lives—hotter high temperatures and more frequent droughts, fires and catastrophic storms—the nearly 200 countries that have signed the Paris Climate Agreement have each pledged to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. (The U.S. goal, for instance, is 26 to 28% below 2005 levels by 2025.)

And reducing beef consumption may be key. The United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that raising livestock for meat and dairy produces 14.5% of all anthropogenic (human-caused) greenhouse gas emissions—about the same amount as the transportation sector. Ruminant animals like cattle and lamb, in fact, contribute three-fifths of that massive amount. Research groups like the EAT-Lancet panel say our e orts should

include eating less beef, or none at all.

But some scientists and farmers propose a different future for your burger: grass-fed beef produced through regenerative agriculture. A growing body of research suggests that grass-fed beef could help humans repair some of the damage we've done to our soils, our waterways and our atmosphere. It's one of the few good-news stories in climate change—but it's going to take a massive e ort on the part of ranchers, beef processors and consumers to make beef the solution to a problem it has helped create.

According to Project Drawdown, an organization dedicated to finding ways to "draw down" greenhouse gas levels in the atmosphere, our love for beef contributes to climate change in three ways. In the major beef-producing countries, cattle spend a chunk of their lives fattening up on corn, soybeans and other grains, and the fossil fuels and nitrogen fertilizer we use to grow these crops release massive amounts of carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide into the air. In addition, countries like Brazil are burning down huge swaths of tropical forest to make room for soybeans and cattle pastures, releasing carbon dioxide while removing all the vegetation that could recapture and store that carbon in their trunks, leaves and roots.

The third source of greenhouse gases: the cattle themselves. "If we look at the greenhouse gas emissions from cattle, the largest part is enteric methane," says Senorpe Asem-Hiablie, a research fellow with Project Drawdown, referring to the

methane the animals produce as they digest their food. Enteric methane (aka "cow burps") represents one-fifth of all the anthropogenic methane emissions—and the gas is 28 to 34 times as potent as carbon dioxide at trapping heat.

Enteric methane levels have been going up. Humans produce more than twice as much beef worldwide as we did 50 years ago, and the world's appetite for meat just keeps growing. By 2050, when the global population is projected to hit 10 billion, the World Resources Institute (WRI) estimates that demand for all meat will rise 88% from just 40 years before.

One last depressing set of statistics to hit you with: even if we wanted to double our meat consumption, the planet may not let us. According to WRI calculations, ruminants already require two-thirds of the planet's agricultural land. We can't just burn down more forest to make room.

Scientific efforts are underway to make raising cattle better for the environment, by breeding them to put on weight more efficiently or feeding them seaweed to reduce the methane they burp. But some farmers are approaching ranching in a radically different way: they see cattle as a powerful tool for capturing carbon from the air and sequestering it in the soil where it belongs.

SEVERAL TIMES A DAY, CARRIE RICHARDS HEADS out to visit the cows grazing on her family's ranch in the rolling Sierra Foothills of Northern California. But she's not necessarily going to monitor the animals—she's inspecting the grass in the paddock. Sometimes she gets two days before she has to herd them onto another 10-acre stretch of land. Sometimes it's just 24 hours. The land tells her.

Five years ago, Richards moved back to the 6,500-acre farm that her great-grandfather had bought in 1941. Her father had ranched the conventional way, raising the calves born on its ranch for a few months before selling them at auction. Most went to concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFO), or feedlots, where the they would spend their last months bulking up on corn and other grains. But Richards and her siblings Tom and Noelle wanted to find a better way to raise beef and, in her words, give back to the land. So she studied holistic managed grazing, also called regenerative ranching.

Farmers practicing regenerative agriculture take on a number of practices to build healthy, fertile soils, whether they're growing tomatoes, wheat or forage for cattle: to prevent rainwater and wind from eroding the topsoil, for one, they never leave the soil bare. Instead, between plantings of cash crops to sell, farmers plant cover crops—particularly legumes, such as clover and peas, which "fix" nitrogen in the soil, reducing or eliminating the need for nitrogen fertilizers. They also minimize tilling the soil between plantings or practice "no-till" agriculture, so the previous crop decomposes on the fields even as the farmers plant the next. Many avoid spraying pesticides and herbicides to help the microorganisms in the soil flourish, nourishing the

plants in ways soil scientists are just now beginning to understand.

How do cattle play a role in this process? After all, they eat a lot, and anyone who has spent time in a gardening store knows that manure and urine make great plant food, but they're not exactly the sole solution.

Pioneering researchers like Allan Savory, whose Savory Method first articulated the holistic management practices that regenerative ranchers like Richards have taken up, proposed that ruminants play a critical role in maintaining the health of grasslands and preventing desertification. Savory, a Zimbabwe-born researcher, observed the migration patterns of large ruminants across the African plains and theorized that cattle could play the same role on farms.

Richards' cattle now spend their entire lives eating grass or, in California's dry season, hay. When they decamp from one paddock to another, they thunder onto the lush pasture and take big bites of the grasses. But just a few. "If you chomp a grass plant down to the dirt, it takes a long time for that grass to grow back," she says. "If you only take about half of it, it still has a lot of vigor left, and it can reboot itself quickly."

When cattle are limited to nibbling only part of the greenery, they encourage the plant to regrow and spread its roots farther.

That's the soil-building magic, regenerative farmers and scientists agree: those grasses have grown by capturing carbon dioxide from the air, keeping the carbon molecule to build their cell structure and returning the free oxygen to the atmosphere for us to breathe. When cattle are given a chance to nibble only part of the greenery, they encourage the plant to regrow and spread its roots farther. Those roots contribute organic matter to the soil and exude liquid carbon into the soil, where it feeds the microorganisms underground.

Meanwhile, the cows' hooves break up the soil, making it more porous and able to retain water, and they crush some of the plant matter into the ground to decay. They spread a fine layer of urine and manure as well. Over the years, the topsoil becomes darker, clumpier, richer and denser with nutrients—which in turn makes the grasses growing in it more nutritious to the cattle when they next pass through.

There are a host of other benefits to land and animals alike: the soil absorbs water more quickly and retains it longer, helping keep the plants healthier and allowing the land to better survive drought. When regenerative farmers stop applying chemical fertilizers, they reduce nitrate pollution in waterways and aquifers. When they stop using pesticides, all manner of flora and fauna return to their fields, promoting biodiversity. And when they stop using antibiotics, which cattle in dense feedlots require to stay healthy, they may help prevent the rise in antibiotic-resistant diseases, a problem that some studies have found to result in part from the overuse of antibiotics in livestock.

Tim Joseph, president of the Grassfed Alliance, says you can't profitably raise grass-fed, grass-finished beef (meaning it was never fed grain) unless you employ regenerative agriculture techniques. He's watched farmer after farmer in the alliance struggle through a difficult transition from when they give up spraying chemicals to juice up their soil fertility and when all the biological systems on their land finally click into gear. "They go from not having enough grass for the cows to not having enough cows for the grass," Joseph says. Not only that, he adds, but levels of organic matter (aka carbon) in their soil rises 1% to a whopping 6% within just a few years—a feat that would take Mother Nature decades to replicate. That surge in soil carbon is what has caught the attention of environmental scientists.

There's a nascent but growing body of research measuring the effect of regenerative ranching on soil carbon. Paige Stanley, a doctoral student at the University of California, Berkeley, and Jason Rowntree of the University of Western Michigan co-authored a 2019 study of a regenerative ranching operation in Michigan that showed the land sequestered 3,790 kilograms of carbon per hectare per year over a four-year period. A second study the two published in 2020 looked at similar data for White Oak Pastures in Georgia, which raises cattle and other animals on holistically managed pastures. There, they found that the farm sequestered 2,290 kilograms per hectare per year over the course of

20 years. To give you some sense of perspective, if California were able to sequester just half that amount annually on just half of its rangelands, the state would o set the emissions from all the energy California's commercial and residential sectors consumes. "Regnerative grazing has huge potential to sequester carbon," Stanley says.

But is all that sequestered carbon enough to counteract the environmental impact of beef? That's where debate currently roils.

Optimists like the Rodale Institute, which published a report titled "Regenerative Agriculture and the Soil Carbon Solution" in 2020, have examined some of these new studies and calculated that if everyone on Earth adopted regenerative agriculture, we could reverse the buildup of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Critics argue that regenerative ranching can't possibly supply Earth's growing demand for meat. They point out that grass-fed beef requires two times the amount of land that conventional beef does, and it takes cattle 6 to 12 months longer to bulk up on grass compared to corn, burping methane all the while. (Both of those factors—land and time—are also partly why grass-fed beef still costs more than conventional beef.) In fact, neither of the studies by Stanley and Rowntrees cited above concluded that the soil carbon sequestration fully o set enteric methane.

Other critics, many of whom advocate giving up livestock altogether, argue that prime farmland in Georgia or Michigan could grow far more crops directly for humans. Even more e ective: these former temperate forests could be replanted with trees, which could sequester even more carbon than regeneratively ranched soils.

Stanley says she spends a lot of time on social media arguing against both extremes, partly because she's afraid even the overly optimistic ones will provoke a skeptical backlash. Her doctoral research is looking at the vast rangelands in the West, like Carrie Richards' family ranch, that aren't suitable for crops to see how much carbon these lands might be capable of holding. Regenerative ranching doesn't need to single-handedly solve climate change to have a huge impact on the environment, she argues. "Any opportunity to be grazing better, to prevent overgrazing and carbon loss in any chunk of the supply chain, is a positive in my mind," she says.

Richards is already seeing her family's rangelands heal after 80 years of close grazing. The plant diversity is growing, and the bands of green grass along the riparian zones—where water flows down through the hills—grow wider every year. Her calves put on weight more quickly. When scientists first measured the carbon levels of her soils, they estimated she was adding one ton per acre every year. That number may be increasing.

Asem-Hiablie, of Project Drawdown, sees regenerative ranching as one possible strategy among many—including those methane-reducing supplements, for instance. Consumers eliminating food waste is another. "We have to look at things holistically," she says. "We have to look at not only the environmental but the social aspect as well as the economic aspect."

In America, the market for grass-fed beef is still niche, representing 4% of the total U.S. beef market. Yet according to the Grassfed Alliance, the market grew from $1 billion to $1.6 billion between 2015 and 2019. Joseph says that the best way to convince ranchers across the country to adopt these soil-building, carbon-sequestering ranching practices is to show them that consumers want grass-fed beef.

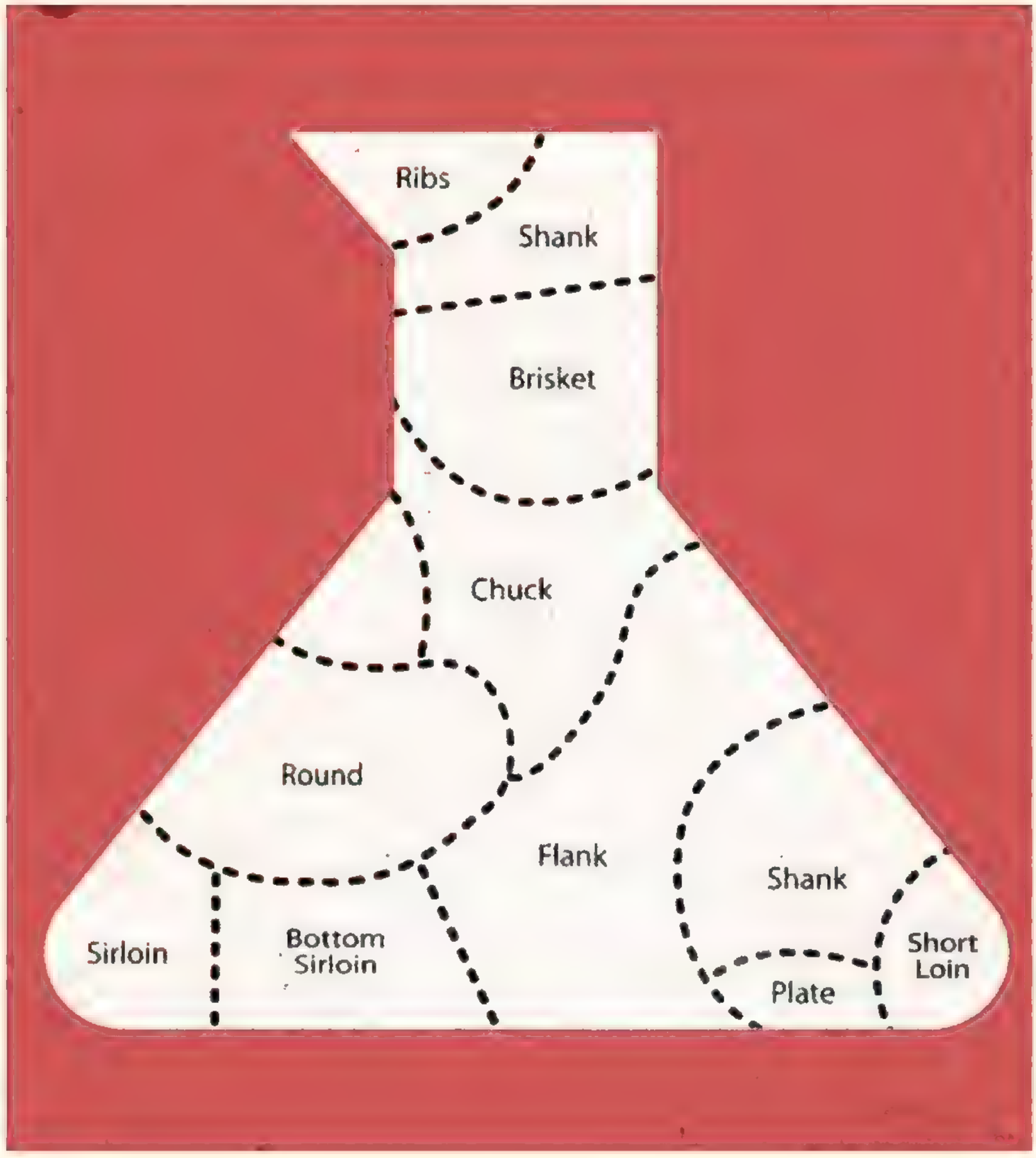
Perhaps the best way to fight climate change with our diets is to take both the EAT-Lancet Commission's recommendations and the promises of regenerative ranching into account: when it comes to beef, eat less—but eat better. 0

Will Lab-Grown Meat Go Mainstream?

An expert on food innovation weighs in on the prospects of cell-based meat.

BY BRAD BARBERA

We've seen an explosion of interest in the cell-based meat industry (also called cellular agriculture). This is meat that's grown in a controlled, clean production facility by "feeding" a small sample of animal cells the right nutrients so that they multiply and grow until you have enough to make an actual piece of meat. And I think we're at an inflection point now where we'll see the technology accelerate much faster than we have in the past five years. Some of the brands pursuing cellular ag are Memphis Meats and Finless Foods. Products are not on the grocery store shelves yet, but within 10 years, we're looking at cellular beef, chicken and fish competing side-by-side with conventionally produced meat. In fact, I see cellular ag vastly outperforming traditional animal products because, as the technology improves, it can be designed to fit the consumer's needs. Imagine being able to select a blend of your favorite proteins—say, beef, pork and ostrich—combined in a single piece of meat with the exact texture and amount and type of fat you want (higher in omega-3s and lower in saturated fat, for example). You wouldn't be limited by an animal's biology or how it was raised.



Eventually, the technology will get to the point where consumers simply enjoy it for the superior taste and a ordable price. They won't think about the fact that it's cell-based meat—they'll eat it because they like it. Because it's the new normal. I love comparing it to the example of Louise Brown, the world's first test-tube baby. When she was born more than 40 years ago, many considered IVF (in vitro fertilization) "unnatural" and her parents got hate mail. But now there are more than 8 million people in the world—that's the entire population of New York City—who were born through IVF. It's perfectly normal and acceptable. That's how I imagine these meats being seen.

Brad Barbera is a former director of innovation at the Good Food Institute, a nonprofit think tank in Washington, D.C., that focuses on transforming our food system from industrial animal agriculture to one centered on plant-based alternatives and cell-based meat.

A HEARTY STAPLE

Legumes (lentils, beans, chickpeas and the like) can be a good, environment-friendly source of plant-based protein.

BY ASHLEY ABRAMSON

When Nick Wiseman dreamed up his Washington, D.C., restaurant Little Sesame, he had a simple mission. Hummus, a chickpea-based spread, is a kitchen staple for many Americans—but it's often seen as an add-on, not the main course. Wiseman's mission? Reposition hummus as the main player in flavorful bowls, pita sandwiches and salads.

Of course, the food is healthy and delicious, but Wiseman is just as concerned about where that food comes from and how it impacts the earth. Little Sesame sources its chickpeas from a Montana grower dedicated to regenerative farming, a type of agriculture that rebuilds organic-matter biodiversity in the soil, which helps reverse climate change by reducing carbon drawdown and improving the water cycle.

Just as Starbucks transformed how people thought about coffee as part of their everyday routines, Wiseman wants to promote hummus as a pantry essential—for both the health of Americans and the earth they live on. "We want our brand to connect the dots between what we eat and how it impacts our health and the planet," he says. "It's not just about putting hummus bowls and pita sandwiches on our menu, but promoting a healthy, active, good-for-the-planet lifestyle."

Legumes and the Environment

Growing chickpeas on regenerative farms isn't the only way to protect the environment. Becky Ramsing, M.P.H., a senior program officer of food communities and public health at the Johns Hopkins

+
COLORFUL AND VERSATILE, LENTILS ARE ALSO PACKED WITH PROTEIN, FIBER AND IRON.

Center for a Livable Future, says all legumes—chickpeas, beans, lentils and peas, for example—play a major role in promoting sustainability.

One of the biggest threats to the earth's well-being is greenhouse-gas emissions, which trap heat from the sun in the earth's atmosphere and cause the planet to get hotter. Because meat production is one of the biggest contributors to greenhouse-gas-related climate change, reducing animal protein intake is an important step toward protecting the environment.

Along with reducing meat production and consumption, legumes come with several environmental benefits of their own. According to Gerd Bobe, Ph.D., an associate professor of agricultural sciences at Oregon State University, legumes self-fertilize by absorbing nitrogen from the environment, which means they protect the atmosphere from excess nitrogen. And because farmers need less fertilizer to grow legumes, less nitrogen from that fertilizer ends up in the atmosphere.

Bobe says legumes are also highly water efficient, which means that growing them takes a lot less water than producing animal products. For example, to produce a single kilogram of lentils, a farmer only needs 50 liters of water. To produce the same amount of chicken requires 4,325 liters of water; the amount for beef is even higher.

Other benefits: legumes are relatively inexpensive, are easy to produce and can grow almost anywhere—even in poor soil conditions—which Bobe says could help decrease world hunger and promote individual economic stability. Dry and canned foods also take a lot longer to spoil than, say, meat or vegetables, which results in less food waste.

The Nutritional Benefits of Legumes

Legumes are often seen as an essential protein for vegetarian and plant-based diets, but a growing body of scientific research suggests everyone can benefit from upping their legume intake.

According to Bobe, legumes—which, for his research purposes, he defines primarily as beans, chickpeas and lentils—are an ideal source of protein. For one, beans contain a comparable amount of protein to meat—for example, one cup of black beans contains almost as much protein as three ounces of beef.

But unlike animal proteins, legumes don't contain much fat and are practically free of saturated fat and cholesterol, both of which are shown to contribute to heart disease risk. Another difference from animal protein: legumes are naturally high in fiber, which Bobe says helps bind toxins and cholesterol in the gut and promotes healthy digestion.

Chef Rani Polak, M.D., M.B.A., founding director of the Culinary Healthcare Education Fundamentals Coaching program at the Harvard Institute of Lifestyle Medicine, says legumes are ideal for people watching their weight or managing diabetes. Not only are they a complex carb with a low-glycemic index, but they're also lower in calories than most animal-based proteins.

Legumes also offer important micronutrients, such as zinc, potassium, B vitamins, iron, manganese and phosphorus. And like fruits and vegetables, many legumes are rich in antioxidants.

Thanks to their nutritional content, there's plenty of scientific evidence that legumes play a role in preventing and managing diseases. Bobe's research suggests antioxidant content can play a role in reducing cancer risk. And according to a 2015 paper in *Clinical Diabetes*, legume consumption can promote weight loss, help people manage type 2 diabetes, lower total and LDL cholesterol levels and reduce blood pressure. As a result, Ramsing says, ample legume consumption can also reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Much of the research on legumes, including Bobe's, focuses on dried beans, but canned beans don't have any major nutritional differences, says Jessica Levinson, M.S., R.D.N., C.D.N., a culinary nutrition expert in Westchester, New York. "People think they're high in sodium or contain preservatives, but the truth is, canned foods are only 1% of our sodium intake," she says. "The majority of sodium comes from highly processed foods and fast foods." If you're trying to decrease your sodium intake, Levinson says, rinsing and draining the beans can remove about 40% of the added sodium.

Incorporating Legumes into Your Diet

While the U.S. Dietary Guidelines recommend eating 1.5 cups of beans each week, Ramsing says Americans currently consume an average of only ⅓ cup

a week. Part of increasing legume intake among Americans means demystifying them, understanding not only the ways they promote physical and environmental health, but how to incorporate them into a diet.

The first thing to know? Those beans, chickpeas and lentils in your pantry can taste just as delicious as any other food when you make the same e ort to season them. "It can be daunting to cook legumes, but they deserve the same attention you'd give other everyday proteins," says Wiseman. "We take so much time cooking meat and fish, and if you give the same attention to beans, they can be delicious. It just takes time and e ort to get there in your own life."

If you want to integrate more legumes into your diet, Bobe suggests starting small. Since they're a high-fiber, complex carbohydrate, too many of the same legumes can cause a bit of bloating, so focus on eating a variety of legume types in small amounts throughout the day.

The same rule applies to cooking: dip your toes in to find what you like and what works best for your routine. If you're new to the legume world, start with simple recipes. Dry chickpeas, for example, need to be soaked overnight, then cooked for 90 minutes. Orange lentils don't need to be soaked at all, and it takes only five minutes to cook them. "If you're short of time and don't want to mess around in the kitchen, focus on easy-to-prepare legumes," Polak says. You can buy canned or even frozen varieties if soaking and hours of cooking don't work for your schedule.

Once you find legumes you like, slowly swap them with your typical animal proteins or starchy foods. For example, you could eat a few ounces of meat and half a cup of beans at dinner, or replace your noodles or potatoes with legumes.

Legumes are consumed around the world and are staples in many cultures, so Ramsing says international foods are a great way to try new beans, along with new flavors and ingredients. "The best thing is to diversify your legume intake by using them in di erent ways, even in a single meal," Bobe says.

For a protein and general nutrition boost in any meal, Levinson recommends adding pureed beans to sauces, soups and casseroles. "For example, I have a pasta recipe where I puree sun-dried tomatoes, roasted red peppers, chickpeas and onions," she says. "It's like a pasta sauce, but a whole lot healthier." You can also whip up your own bean-based burgers or include beans as an addition to grain salads, adding your favorite fresh herbs to boost the flavor.

No matter what you cook, focus on sustainability. As with any habit, you'll go a lot further if you prioritize progress instead of perfection. "For example, you can take one day of the week, such as 'meatless Monday,' to try beans," Ramsing says. "Small changes make a big di erence—and if many of us make these small changes, the impact grows." 0

HOG HEAVEN

Russ Kremer's delicious pork starts on the farm, where he's perfected the art of raising pigs sustainably.

BY LUCY M. CLARK

It's still the early hours of the morning as Russ Kremer wipes dew o his sleeping bag and switches on his headlamp, but his hogs are audibly awake and grazing. He's nearly through another stint spending 24 hours straight alongside his herd (including sleeping in the woods with them)—a self-assigned research experiment. The goal: to discern exactly what his Tamworth pigs like to do when he's not around. Most important, Kremer watches what they eat.

"I want to know what a pig desires and what he don't," says the fifth-generation hog farmer. Over the last 30 years, Kremer has built his successful pork business on exactly that—his passion for giving pigs a supremely happy, healthy, humane life. By all accounts, his pigs enjoy a veritable playground on Kremer's 146 acres outside Frankenstein, Missouri. Here, the hogs have a world of options: to root for acorns in woodlands, swim in cool wallows, explore pastures or nap on deep-bedded straw in naturally ventilated buildings. And they can always eat. Kremer provides them a 24/7 bu et of nutritious food choices, from ancient grains to legumes.

"It sounds like paradise, doesn't it?" Kremer reflects. But it wasn't always like this. After graduating from the University of Missouri's ag school, Kremer returned to the family farm convinced large-scale and high-tech agriculture was best. He began farming the industrial way: crowding his pigs into confinement facilities and loading them up with "feed additives," subtherapeutic antibiotics to promote rapid growth. Within a year, however, Kremer saw the health of his animals drastically decline. He also received a curious diagnosis from the vet: his pigs were coming down with infections that were resistant to most antibiotics.

The spring of 1989 changed everything. Kremer was cut while working with one of his hogs. The injury quickly became infected. Though he was treated with seven di erent antibiotics, nothing worked. "I was suspicious that maybe I had created some sort of superbug and that this disease was one

that I contracted from my pigs," he recalls. When the infection became septic, Kremer convinced doctors to treat him for the same infection his pigs had at the time. "Within 24 hours, I was cured. But more importantly, I knew I had in part caused the problem by feeding my pigs antibiotics."

Kremer started from scratch. He bought new hogs, focusing on heirloom breeds. He built fresh facilities, giving them unlimited outdoor access. He tossed antibiotics. And he began to develop a stock of Tamworth pigs, an athletic, heirloom breed from England with a robust immunity to disease and the ability—when fed acorns—to produce meat resembling the prized Ibérico, the black-foot breed of pigs from Spain that is most famously turned into ham. Eventually, Kremer started a cooperative of farmers raising pigs to high standards of humane treatment, today's Heritage Foods.

The result of all Kremer's tender love and care? An incredibly flavorful product—described as distinctly marbled, juicy and sweet. Meat guru Bruce Aidells agrees: "The commodity pork that you can buy are fed a very industrially controlled diet; they're pretty tasteless. They just don't have the depth of flavor—the porkiness—that a beautifully raised pig like Russ Kremer's does. These are happy pigs and that really makes a difference."

Back to that early-morning wake-up call: as the sun rises over Osage County, Kremer watches his hogs munch on fallen acorns. He leans back in his sleeping bag again and takes it all in. This really is paradise—for these hogs and their farmer. ●

WELL-RAISED RECIPES

Source some high-quality pork as a step toward a spectacular supper.

BY BRUCE AIDELL

Roasted Fennel & Italian Sausage Stuffing

ACTIVE: 45 min
TOTAL: 1 hr 35 min
TO MAKE AHEAD: Refrigerate sausage (Step 4) for up to 2 days or freeze for up to 3 months.

This stuffing recipe is special because it comes complete with a sausage-making lesson from the Sausage King himself, Bruce Aidells.

- 6 cups cubed crustless whole-wheat sourdough bread
- 2 medium fennel bulbs, cored and sliced
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1½ teaspoons ground pepper, divided
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- 1 pound pork shoulder butt, trimmed and cut into 1-inch cubes
- 3 ounces sliced bacon or pancetta, cut into 1-inch squares
- 2 teaspoons minced fresh sage, divided
- 2 teaspoons minced fresh thyme, divided
- 1½ teaspoons minced garlic
- 1½ teaspoons whole fennel seed
- ½ teaspoon ground fennel seed
- 1 cup chopped onion
- ½ cup chopped celery
- 1½ cups low-sodium chicken broth
- ½ cup chopped fresh parsley

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat a 9-by-13-inch baking dish with cooking spray.
2. Spread bread on a large rimmed baking sheet. Bake, stirring occasionally, until dry but not hard, about 15 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl.
3. Increase oven temperature to 450°F. Toss fennel in a large bowl with 1 tablespoon oil, ¼ teaspoon pepper and ⅛ teaspoon salt. Spread on the baking sheet. Roast, stirring occasionally, until tender and golden, about 25 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board; let cool for 5 minutes. Coarsely chop and add to the bowl.
4. Meanwhile, pulse pork and bacon (or pancetta) in a food processor until coarsely chopped. Transfer to a medium bowl and add 1 teaspoon each sage and thyme, garlic, fennel seed, ground fennel, 1 teaspoon pepper and ¼ teaspoon salt. Knead and squeeze the meat until well blended.
5. Heat the remaining 1 tablespoon oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the sausage and cook, crumbling with a wooden spoon, until no longer pink, about 5 minutes. Add onion, celery and the remaining 1 teaspoon each sage and thyme. Reduce heat to medium, cover and cook, stirring frequently, until the vegetables are soft, about 10 minutes. Transfer the mixture to the bowl with the bread. Add broth to the pan and bring to a simmer, scraping up any browned bits, then add to the sausage mixture. Stir in parsley and the remaining ¼ teaspoon pepper and ⅛ teaspoon salt. Transfer the stuffing to the prepared baking dish. Cover with foil.
6. Bake for 20 minutes. Uncover; bake until slightly crisp on top, 15 to 20 minutes more.

SERVES 12: ⅔ CUP EACH
CAL 174 FAT 7G (SAT 2G) CHOL 24MG CARBS 16G TOTAL SUGARS 4G (ADDED 0G) PROTEIN 10G FIBER 3G SODIUM 273MG POTASSIUM 325MG

Roasted Pork Shoulder with Tequila Citrus Sauce

ACTIVE: 45 min TOTAL: 4¼ hrs (including 1 hr refrigeration time)
TO MAKE AHEAD: Refrigerate pork (Step 1) overnight.

Pork shoulder makes a wonderful roast because it has enough fat to keep it moist and tender during low and slow cooking. The citrus sauce has a smoky, agave sweetness from the tequila and produces a bright counterpoint to the unctuous meat. Serve any extra sauce for dipping.

Spice Rub & Pork

- **2½ tablespoons chopped fresh sage**
- **2 tablespoons minced garlic**
- **2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil**
- **1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme**
- **1 tablespoon lemon zest**
- **2 teaspoons kosher salt**
- **2 teaspoons ground pepper**
- **1 teaspoon cumin seeds**
- **1 4-pound boneless pork shoulder roast**

Sauce

- **2 cups orange juice**
- **⅓ cup lemon juice**
- **⅓ cup lime juice**
- **¼ cup agave syrup or corn syrup**
- **¼ cup tequila**
- **1 tablespoon fish sauce**
- **2 teaspoons minced garlic**
- **½ teaspoon hot sauce**
- **¼ cup fresh cilantro for garnish**

1. **To prepare spice rub & pork:** Combine sage, 2 tablespoons garlic, oil, thyme, lemon zest, salt, pepper and cumin in a small bowl. Place pork, fat-side up, in a baking pan and rub the spice mixture all over the top and sides. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or overnight.
2. When ready to roast the pork, position a rack in bottom third of oven; preheat to 450°F.
3. Transfer the pork to a rack set in a roasting pan. Roast for 20 minutes.
4. Reduce oven temperature to 325°F. Continue roasting until an instant-read thermometer inserted in the thickest part registers 170°F for a tender but sliceable texture or 180°F for a pull-apart texture, 2½ to 3½ hours.
5. Transfer the pork to a cutting board; loosely cover with foil. Let rest for at least 15 minutes.
6. **Meanwhile, to prepare sauce:** Pour orange, lemon and lime juices into the roasting pan. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat and cook until reduced to 2 cups, about 5 minutes. Stir in agave (or corn) syrup, tequila, fish sauce, garlic and hot sauce. Cook, stirring occasionally and scraping up any browned bits, until the sauce is the consistency of a light syrup but not thick enough to coat a spoon, 6 to 8 minutes. Strain the sauce through a fine-mesh sieve (discard the solids).
7. Thinly slice or shred the pork and drizzle the sauce over it. Garnish with cilantro.

SERVES 8–10 (WITH LEFTOVERS): 3 OZ. PORK & GENEROUS 1 TBSP. SAUCE EACH
CAL 254 FAT 15G (SAT 5G) CHOL 69MG CARBS 8G TOTAL SUGARS 6G (ADDED 4G) PROTEIN 18G FIBER 0G SODIUM 374MG POTASSIUM 302MG

Pork Tenderloin "Rosa di Parma"

ACTIVE: 25 min TOTAL: 55 min
EQUIPMENT: Kitchen string

It's not unusual to find a Parmigiano-Reggiano-stuffed roast like this served at special family celebrations in the Italian province of Parma, but it's often made with beef. This version doubles down on the pork by stuffing it with prosciutto along with the cheese. You can certainly use Italian prosciutto, but consider cured American hams like La Quercia's Tamworth Prosciutto made from Russ Kremer's pork.

- **2 teaspoons finely chopped fresh sage**
- **1½ teaspoons minced garlic**
- **1 teaspoon finely chopped rosemary**
- **1 teaspoon kosher salt**
- **1 teaspoon ground pepper**
- **2 pork tenderloins (1–1¼ pounds each), trimmed**
- **4 thin slices prosciutto**
- **1 cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese**
- **3 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided**

1. Combine sage, garlic, rosemary, salt and pepper in a small bowl. Set aside.
2. Preheat oven to 450°F.
3. Double butterfly the tenderloins, so they can be flattened, stuffed and rolled. To do that, you'll make two long horizontal cuts, one on each side, dividing the tenderloin in thirds without cutting all the way through. Lay one tenderloin on a cutting board. Holding the knife blade flat, so it's parallel to the board, make a lengthwise cut into the side of the tenderloin one-third of the way down from the top, stopping short of the opposite edge so that the flaps remain attached. Rotate the tenderloin 180 degrees. Still holding the knife parallel to the cutting board, make a lengthwise cut into the side opposite the original cut, starting two-thirds of the way down from the top of the tenderloin and taking care not to cut all the way through. Open up the two cuts so you have a large rectangle of meat. Use the heel of your hand to gently flatten the meat to about ½ inch thick. Repeat with the second tenderloin.
4. Cover each butterflied tenderloin with 2 prosciutto slices, then spread ½ cup Parmigiano-Reggiano over the prosciutto, leaving a 1-inch border. Starting with a long side, roll up each tenderloin so the stuffing is in a spiral pattern, then tie the roasts at 2-inch intervals with kitchen string.
5. Lightly brush the roasts all over with 1½ teaspoons oil, then rub with the reserved herb mixture. Heat the remaining 1½ teaspoons oil in a large, heavy, ovenproof skillet over medium-high heat. Add the roasts, bending to fit if necessary, and cook, turning often, until browned on all sides, 3 to 5 minutes total.
6. Transfer the pan to the oven. Roast, checking often, until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part registers 145°F, 15 to 20 minutes. Transfer the roasts to a cutting board, tent with foil and let rest for 5 minutes. To serve, remove the string and cut the pork into 1-inch-thick slices.

SERVES 10: ABOUT 3 OZ. EACH
CAL 175 FAT 7G (SAT 3G) CHOL 72MG
CARBS 1G TOTAL SUGARS 0G (ADDED 0G)
PROTEIN 26G FIBER 0G SODIUM 619MG
POTASSIUM 368MG

CHAPTER 3

HIT THE KITCHEN

From pub-inspired burgers to flavorful tofu dishes, these recipes put our favorite proteins on center stage.

TOFU: REIMAGINED

A meat expert and founder of Aidells Sausage Company gives this favorite flavor-challenged protein a makeover.

BY BRUCE AIDELLS

Tomato & Onion Salad with Crispy Tofu

ACTIVE: 45 min TOTAL: 3¾ hrs (including pressing and marinating time)
TO MAKE AHEAD: Marinate tofu (Steps 1-2) for up to 1 day.
Tofu definitely benefits from a marinade, in this case lemon juice, olive oil and fresh herbs. Aidells presses the tofu first, which concentrates the subtle soy flavor and improves the texture by removing some of the water. But what really makes this recipe special is the Parmesan cheese crust, which transforms the tofu into a soft, cheesy "crouton."

Crispy Tofu

- **1 14- to 16-ounce package extra-firm water-packed tofu, drained**
- **5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided**
- **¼ cup lemon juice**
- **2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil**
- **2 teaspoons chopped fresh oregano**
- **1 teaspoon ground pepper**
- **⅛ teaspoon kosher salt**
- **¼ cup all-purpose flour**
- **2 large eggs**
- **⅔ cup grated Parmesan cheese**
- **⅓ cup whole-wheat panko**

Salad

- **4 ripe medium tomatoes, each cut into 6 wedges**
- **2 cups halved and thinly sliced sweet onion**
- **½ cup Castelvetrano olives**
- **¼ cup chopped pitted Kalamata olives**
- **3 tablespoons chopped fresh basil, divided**
- **2 teaspoons chopped fresh oregano, divided**
- **3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil**
- **2 tablespoons red-wine vinegar**
- **1 tablespoon lemon juice**
- **¼ teaspoon ground pepper**
- **⅛ teaspoon kosher salt**

1. **To marinate tofu:** Cut tofu crosswise into 8 equal pieces and press for 1 to 4 hours.

2. Combine 2 tablespoons oil, ¼ cup lemon juice, 2 tablespoons basil, 2 teaspoons oregano, 1 teaspoon pepper and ⅛ teaspoon salt in a 9-by-13-inch glass or ceramic baking dish. Add the pressed tofu and turn to coat. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours and up to 24 hours, turning from time to time.

3. **To prepare salad:** Toss tomatoes, onion, olives, 2 tablespoons basil, 1 teaspoon oregano, oil, vinegar, lemon juice, pepper and salt in a large bowl. Set aside, tossing occasionally.

4. **To cook tofu:** Discard the marinade and pat the tofu dry. Place flour in a shallow dish. Lightly beat eggs in another shallow dish. Combine Parmesan and panko in a third shallow dish. Dredge the tofu in the flour, shaking off excess, then dip in egg, shaking off excess, then dredge in the cheese mixture, pressing to coat.

5. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add half the tofu, reduce heat to medium and cook, turning once, until browned, 2 to 4 minutes per side. Transfer to a paper-towel-lined plate. Repeat with the remaining 1 tablespoon oil and tofu.

6. Transfer the salad to a serving bowl. Top with the tofu and the remaining 1 tablespoon basil and 1 teaspoon oregano.

SERVES 4: 1½ CUPS SALAD & 2 PIECES TOFU EACH
CAL 548 FAT 44G (SAT 7G) CHOL 55MG CARBS 23G TOTAL SUGARS 7G (ADDED 0G) PROTEIN 18G FIBER 5G SODIUM 641MG POTASSIUM 587MG

Tofu, Chicken & Eggplant Curry

ACTIVE: 1¼ hrs TOTAL: 2¾ hrs (including pressing time)
TO MAKE AHEAD: Store spice blend (Step 3) at room temperature for up to 1 week. Refrigerate chicken (Step 5) for up to 1 day.
Aidells had a revelation after eating chicken and eggplant curry at an old-fashioned "curry palace" on a trip to England. The rich and spicy tomato-based sauce was studded with cubes of mild, soft paneer cheese, which provided nice contrast to the other ingredients. He realized cubes of baked, seasoned tofu could be used instead. (If you want to make this curry vegetarian, replace the chicken with another pound of tofu and double the curry spice, cornstarch and salt in Step 6.)

Curry

- **1 14- to 16-ounce package extra-firm water-packed tofu, drained**
- **1 large eggplant, cut into 1½-inch cubes**
- **2 teaspoons kosher salt, divided**
- **1½ pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into ½-inch strips**
- **9 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided**
- **1 tablespoon cornstarch**
- **2 cups thinly sliced onion**
- **2 tablespoons minced fresh ginger**
- **3 tablespoons minced garlic**
- **1 28-ounce can no-salt-added diced tomatoes**
- **1 cup low-sodium chicken broth**
- **1 cup finely chopped fresh cilantro stems plus ¼ cup chopped leaves, divided**
- **½ cup whole-milk plain Greek yogurt**
- **Freshly ground pepper to taste**

Curry Spice Blend

- **1 tablespoon coriander seeds**
- **1½ teaspoons cumin seeds**
- **1 teaspoon fennel seeds**
- **1 teaspoon fenugreek seeds**
- **1 teaspoon whole black peppercorns**
- **½ teaspoon cardamom seeds (not pods)**
- **1 tablespoon New Mexico chile powder or paprika**
- **1½ teaspoons ground turmeric**
- **½ teaspoon crushed red pepper**
- **⅛ teaspoon ground cinnamon**

1. **To prepare tofu & eggplant:** Cut tofu crosswise into 8 equal pieces and press for 1 to 4 hours.
2. Meanwhile, toss eggplant with ½ teaspoon salt in a colander. Drain for 30 minutes to 1 hour.
3. **To prepare curry spice blend:** Heat a small skillet over medium-high heat. Add coriander, cumin, fennel, fenugreek, peppercorns and cardamom. Toast the spices, stirring constantly, until aromatic and starting to smoke, 1 to 2 minutes. Transfer to a bowl to cool. Grind in a spice grinder (such as a clean coffee grinder) or mortar and pestle. Return to the bowl and stir in chile powder (or paprika), turmeric, crushed red pepper and cinnamon.
4. **To prepare curry:** Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper. Position racks in upper and lower thirds of oven; preheat to 400°F.
5. Toss chicken with 1 tablespoon of the curry spice and ½ teaspoon salt in a medium bowl. Set aside.
6. Cut the tofu into cubes. Toss with 1 tablespoon oil in a medium bowl. Sprinkle with 1 tablespoon curry spice, cornstarch and ½ teaspoon salt and toss again. Spread on the prepared baking sheet.
7. Rinse the eggplant and pat dry. Toss with 4 tablespoons oil and 2 teaspoons curry spice in a medium bowl. Spread on another baking sheet.
8. Roast the tofu on the lower rack, turning once halfway, until lightly browned and beginning to crisp, about 30 minutes. Roast the eggplant on the upper rack, turning once halfway, until soft, about 30 minutes.
9. Meanwhile, heat 2 tablespoons oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add the chicken and cook, stirring often, until browned, about 10 minutes. Remove to a bowl. Add the remaining 2 tablespoons oil, onion and ginger; reduce heat to medium and cook, stirring often, until the onion is quite soft, 7 to 9 minutes. Add garlic and cook, stirring, for 1 minute more. Add the remaining curry spice and stir to coat.
10. Add tomatoes, broth and cilantro stems, stirring to scrape up any browned bits. Stir in yogurt, then the chicken and tofu. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, for 20 minutes.
11. Stir in the eggplant and cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes more. Stir in the remaining ½ teaspoon salt and pepper to taste. Serve topped with cilantro leaves.

SERVES 8: 1¼ CUPS EACH
CAL 396 FAT 26G (SAT 5G) CHOL 59MG CARBS 18G TOTAL SUGARS 8G (ADDED 0G) PROTEIN 25G FIBER 6G SODIUM 528MG POTASSIUM 780MG

Grilled Tofu with Korean BBQ Glaze & Stir-Fried Napa Cabbage

ACTIVE: 1 hr TOTAL: 6 hrs (including pressing and marinating time)

TO MAKE AHEAD: Refrigerate BBQ glaze (Step 2) for up to 2 weeks; marinate tofu (Step 3) for up to 1 day.

The grill gives tofu smokiness and some crispy edges. Here a BBQ sauce made with gochujang, the hot Korean chile paste, doubles as both a glaze and some sauce to slather on the tofu at the table.

Tofu & BBQ glaze

- 1 14- to 16-ounce package extra-firm water-packed tofu, drained
- 3 tablespoons peanut oil, divided
- ½ cup finely chopped red onion
- 2 tablespoons minced garlic
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh ginger
- ¾ cup finely chopped scallions
- ¼ cup reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons gochujang
- 2 tablespoons chili powder or paprika
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 tablespoon toasted (dark) sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 teaspoons white miso
- 2 teaspoons molasses

Cabbage

- 3 tablespoons reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons toasted (dark) sesame oil
- 2 tablespoons peanut oil
- 1½ cups sliced scallions (2-inch pieces), plus ¼ cup thinly sliced for garnish
- 12 cups thinly sliced napa cabbage (1¾–2 pounds)
- 2 tablespoons toasted sesame seeds, divided

1. **To prepare tofu:** Cut tofu crosswise into 8 equal pieces and press for 1 to 4 hours.
2. **To prepare BBQ glaze:** Heat 1 tablespoon peanut oil in a small saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and cook, stirring often, until soft, about 5 minutes. Stir in garlic and ginger and cook 1 minute more. Remove from heat. Stir in scallions, ¼ cup soy sauce, gochujang, chili powder (or paprika), vinegar, water, 1 tablespoon sesame oil, honey, miso and molasses. Transfer to a medium bowl. Refrigerate until cool.
3. **To marinate tofu:** Spread each side of the tofu pieces with 1 teaspoon BBQ glaze. Place in a 9-by-13-inch baking dish. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours and up to 1 day.
4. **To grill tofu:** Preheat grill to medium. Brush both sides of the tofu with the remaining 2 tablespoons peanut oil. Generously oil the grill rack. Grill the tofu until lightly charred, 4 to 5 minutes per side. Transfer to a plate and keep warm.
5. **To prepare cabbage:** Combine soy sauce and sesame oil in a small bowl and place near the stove. Heat peanut oil in a large flat-bottom carbon-steel wok over high heat until very hot. Add scallion pieces and cook, stirring, until softened, 2 to 3 minutes. Add cabbage and cook, stirring, until wilted, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in the soy sauce mixture and 1 tablespoon sesame seeds.
6. Transfer the cabbage to a serving bowl or platter. Top with the grilled tofu. Drizzle the tofu with 3 tablespoons BBQ sauce. Garnish with sliced scallions and the remaining 1 tablespoon sesame seeds. Serve with the remaining sauce, if desired.

SERVES 4: 2 PIECES TOFU & 1¼ CUPS STIR-FRY EACH
CAL 389 FAT 31G (SAT 5G) CHOL 0MG CARBS 18G TOTAL SUGARS 5G (ADDED 3G) PROTEIN 16G FIBER 7G SODIUM 759MG POTASSIUM 870MG

CHANGE UP YOUR CHICKEN

It's your go-to dinner starter. Plus, it's a versatile and reasonably priced protein. Here are some recipes for America's favorite fowl.

Skillet Chicken Parmesan

ACTIVE: 30 min TOTAL: 35 min

If you can't find cutlets at your supermarket, place a boneless, skinless breast flat on a cutting board, hold it steady with your palm and, using a sharp knife, slice the breast horizontally into two thin pieces.

- ¾ cup panko breadcrumbs, preferably whole wheat
- 4 chicken breast cutlets (4 ounces each, about ½ inch thick), trimmed
- 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground pepper
- 1 tablespoon sliced garlic
- 2 cups no-salt-added tomato sauce
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1 cup torn fresh basil, divided
- ¾ cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese

1. Position rack in middle of oven; preheat broiler to high.
2. Place panko in a shallow dish and dredge cutlets in it, pressing gently to fully coat.
3. Heat 1½ tablespoons oil in a large cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat; add half the cutlets and cook until crispy, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Transfer to a plate. Repeat with 1½ tablespoons oil and the remaining cutlets. Season with salt and pepper.
4. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon oil and garlic to the pan; cook, stirring often, until softened and fragrant, about 1 minute. Stir in tomato sauce and sugar and bring to a boil over medium-high. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, stirring occasionally, until slightly thickened, about 5 minutes.
5. Nestle the cutlets into the sauce in the pan. Top with ½ cup basil, mozzarella and Parmesan. Transfer the pan to the oven.
6. Broil until the cheese is bubbling, 2 to 3 minutes. Let cool for 3 minutes before serving. Top with the remaining basil.

SERVES 4: 3 OZ. CHICKEN & ½ CUP SAUCE EACH
CAL 410 FAT 23G (SAT 6G) CHOL 81MG
CARBS 19G TOTAL SUGARS 7G (ADDED 2G)
PROTEIN 33G FIBER 3G SODIUM 432MG
POTASSIUM 643MG

REFRIGERATE, FREEZE
OR COOK CHICKEN
AS SOON AS YOU CAN
AFTER PURCHASING AND
CERTAINLY BEFORE THE
USE-BY DATE ON THE
PACKAGE

Chicken, Quinoa & Sweet Potato Casserole

ACTIVE: 15 min TOTAL: 45 min

This hot dish is made with multicolored quinoa, a blend of white, red and black varieties, but any color will work.

- 4 cups cubed peeled sweet potatoes (about 1 pound)
- 3 tablespoons water
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 1½ pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs, trimmed
- 2 cups chopped seeded poblano chiles
- ½ cup thinly sliced shallots
- 2 tablespoons minced garlic
- 2 cups unsalted chicken broth
- 1½ cups multicolored quinoa
- ⅓ cup dry white wine
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ⅛ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ½ cup crumbled queso fresco
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Place sweet potatoes and water in a microwave-safe bowl. Cover with plastic wrap; pierce a few holes in the top with a fork. Microwave on High for 4 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add chicken and cook until browned, 4 to 5 minutes per side. Transfer the chicken to a clean cutting board and let stand 5 minutes. Cut into 1-inch strips.
4. Add poblanos, shallots and garlic to the pan and cook over medium-high, stirring occasionally, until the shallots are lightly browned, about 2 minutes. Add broth, quinoa, wine, salt, cumin, cinnamon and cayenne. Bring to a boil. Remove from heat and stir in the sweet potatoes and chicken.
5. Spoon the mixture into a 7-by-11-inch (or similar-size) broiler-proof baking dish. Cover with foil. Bake for 20 minutes.
6. Remove from oven; increase oven temperature to broil. Uncover the casserole and sprinkle with cheese. Broil 8 inches from the heat source until golden brown, about 5 minutes. Sprinkle with cilantro. Let cool for 5 minutes before serving.

SERVES 8: 1 CUP EACH
CAL 349 FAT 11G (SAT 3G) CHOL 83MG CARBS 39G
TOTAL SUGARS 6G (ADDED 0G) PROTEIN 23G
FIBER 5G SODIUM 432MG POTASSIUM 660MG

Chicken-&-Mushroom Marsala

ACTIVE: 30 min TOTAL: 30 min

For the best flavor, use real Marsala wine, not the cooking-wine kind. Serve with mashed potatoes.

- **4 chicken breast cutlets (4 ounces each, about ½ inch thick), trimmed**
- **½ teaspoon ground pepper, divided**
- **¼ teaspoon kosher salt plus ⅛ teaspoon, divided**
- **¼ cup all-purpose flour**
- **3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided**
- **8 ounces cremini mushrooms, sliced**
- **8 ounces shiitake mushrooms, stemmed and sliced**
- **½ cup chopped yellow onion**
- **1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves, plus more for garnish**
- **½ cup Marsala**
- **½ cup unsalted chicken broth**
- **½ tablespoon butter**

1. Season chicken with ¼ teaspoon each pepper and salt. Place flour in a shallow dish and dredge the cutlets in it, pressing gently to fully coat.
2. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add half the cutlets and cook until lightly browned, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Transfer to a plate. Repeat with 1 tablespoon oil and the remaining cutlets. Cover to keep warm.
3. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon oil and creminis to the pan; cook, stirring occasionally until tender, 4 to 6 minutes. Transfer to a bowl. Add shiitakes to the pan and cook, stirring occasionally until tender, 4 to 6 minutes. Transfer to the bowl and season with the remaining ⅛ teaspoon salt.
4. Add onion, thyme and the remaining ¼ teaspoon pepper to the pan; cook, stirring often, until the onion is translucent, 2 to 3 minutes. Return the mushrooms to the pan. Stir in Marsala and broth, scraping up any browned bits. Simmer over medium heat until slightly reduced, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in butter. Serve the chicken topped with the sauce.

SERVES 4: 3 OZ. CHICKEN & ABOUT ¼ CUP SAUCE EACH
CAL 333 FAT 15G (SAT 3G) CHOL 66MG CARBS 16G TOTAL SUGARS 6G (ADDED 0G) PROTEIN 27G FIBER 2G SODIUM 262MG POTASSIUM 699MG

Slab Chicken Potpie

ACTIVE: 45 min TOTAL: 1½ hrs

Slab fruit pies are all the rage for summer parties, so why not give chicken potpie the same treatment and create a buzz at a cool-weather game-day gathering as well? Just sayin'.

- 5 cups unsalted chicken broth
- 2 tablespoons white miso
- 1 teaspoon ground pepper, plus more for sprinkling
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 4 large sprigs thyme
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 cup whole milk
- ¾ cup all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- 1¼ pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs, trimmed and cut into bite-size pieces
- 1 24-ounce package frozen mixed vegetables (peas, carrots and corn)
- 1 10-ounce package frozen pearl onions
- 1 cup chopped flat-leaf parsley
- 1 14-ounce package frozen whole-wheat pie crusts, thawed
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten

1. Combine broth, miso, pepper, salt, thyme and bay leaves in a large saucepan. Bring to a boil over high heat. Cook, undisturbed, until reduced to about 4 cups, about 10 minutes. Discard thyme and bay leaves.

2. Whisk milk and flour in a small bowl, then whisk into the broth in the pan. Bring to a boil over high heat; cook, stirring occasionally, for 1 minute. Stir in chicken. Remove from heat and let stand for 5 minutes. Stir in mixed vegetables, onions and parsley. Pour the mixture onto a large rimmed baking sheet.

3. Preheat oven to 425°F.

4. Unroll pie crusts on a lightly floured work surface, placing one on top of the other. Roll out into a 14-by-19-inch rectangle. Cut into 2-by-19-inch strips using a

BBQ Chicken Skillet Pizza

ACTIVE: 30 min TOTAL: 45 min

Mayo and a little vinegar make an Alabama-style white BBQ sauce to drizzle on this pie.

- **12 ounces prepared whole-wheat pizza dough**
- **3 tablespoons mayonnaise**
- **1 teaspoon white-wine vinegar**
- **1 teaspoon sugar**
- **1 medium clove garlic, grated**
- **½ teaspoon prepared horseradish**
- **¼ teaspoon ground pepper**
- **¼ cup tomato sauce**
- **6 ounces shredded cooked chicken breast**
- **½ cup sliced red onion**
- **⅓ cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese**
- **¼ cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese**
- **¼ cup thinly sliced scallions**

1. Place a large cast-iron skillet in the oven; preheat to 500°F.
2. Form dough into a tight ball; place on a lightly floured work surface and cover with a clean towel. Let come to room temperature, about 15 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, whisk mayonnaise, vinegar, sugar, garlic, horseradish and pepper in a small bowl.
4. Roll the dough into a 14-inch circle. Carefully fit into the hot pan, pressing a little up the sides. Bake until slightly crispy, about 5 minutes.
5. Spread tomato sauce over the crust and sprinkle with chicken, onion, mozzarella and Monterey Jack. Bake until the cheese is melted and bubbling and the crust is crispy on the bottom, about 5 minutes.
6. Let the pizza cool for 3 minutes. Drizzle the reserved BBQ sauce on top and sprinkle with scallions. Cut into 4 slices and serve immediately.

SERVES 4: 1 SLICE EACH
CAL 391 FAT 18G (SAT 4G) CHOL 53MG
CARBS 38G TOTAL SUGARS 4G
(ADDED 2G) PROTEIN 24G FIBER 2G
SODIUM 503MG POTASSIUM 225MG

decorative wheel or pizza cutter. Place half the strips diagonally across the chicken mixture, leaving 2-inch gaps in between. Weave in the remaining strips to form a lattice pattern. Trim excess dough from the edges and discard. Brush the top of the dough with egg. Sprinkle with pepper to taste.
5. Bake until the top is browned and the chicken is cooked through, 30 to 35 minutes. Let cool for 5 minutes. Cut into 8 pieces.

SERVES 8: 1 PIECE EACH
CAL 484 FAT 22G (SAT 10G) CHOL 91MG
CARBS 48G TOTAL SUGARS 11G
(ADDED 0G) PROTEIN 24G FIBER 8G
SODIUM 639MG POTASSIUM 577MG

Chicken Enchiladas Verdes

Active: 20 min Total: 45 min

Not in a verde mood? Use tomato salsa instead.

- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup unsalted chicken broth, divided
- 2 cups tomatillo salsa
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ cup chopped fresh cilantro, divided
- 3 cups shredded cooked chicken breast
- 1 15-ounce can no-salt-added black beans, rinsed
- 3 ounces reduced-fat cream cheese
- 12 5-inch corn tortillas
- ½ cup shredded Mexican cheese blend
- ½ cup chopped tomato
- 6 tablespoons reduced-fat sour cream

1. Preheat oven to 425°F.
2. Whisk flour and ½ cup broth in a small bowl. Combine the remaining ½ cup broth, salsa and cumin in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil and whisk in the flour mixture. Cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until reduced to about 2½ cups, 6 to 8 minutes. Stir in ¼ cup cilantro.
3. Spread ½ cup of the salsa mixture in a 9-by-13-inch ovenproof baking dish. Combine chicken, beans, cream cheese and ½ cup of the salsa mixture in a large bowl. Spoon ¼ cup of the chicken mixture onto the center of each tortilla and roll it up into a cigar shape. Arrange, seam-side down, in a single layer over the salsa mixture in the baking dish. Top the enchiladas with the remaining salsa mixture.
4. Bake until bubbling, about 15 minutes.
5. Remove from oven; increase oven temperature to broil. Sprinkle the enchiladas with cheese. Broil 8 inches from the heat source until the cheese is melted, 2 to 3 minutes. Top with tomato and the remaining ¼ cup cilantro and serve with sour cream.

SERVES 6: 2 ENCHILADAS EACH
CAL 387 FAT 12G (SAT 5G) CHOL 84MG
CARBS 36G TOTAL SUGARS 6G (ADDED 0G)
PROTEIN 33G FIBER 7G SODIUM 716MG
POTASSIUM 639MG

Basic Whole Roast Chicken

ACTIVE: 15 min TOTAL: 1 hr 35 min
EQUIPMENT: Kitchen string

This may be the last recipe in this collection, but in many ways it's the most useful. It's a meal on its own or the start of any recipe that calls for cooked chicken.

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh herbs, such as sage, rosemary and/or thyme, divided
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- ¾ teaspoon ground pepper
- 1 4- to 5-pound whole chicken
- 1 small lemon, halved crosswise
- 1 medium head garlic, halved crosswise
- 3 medium carrots, cut into 3-inch pieces
- 3 stalks celery, cut into 3-inch pieces
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced

1. Position rack in the bottom third of oven; preheat to 375°F.
2. Combine butter, 1 tablespoon herbs, ½ teaspoon salt and pepper in a small bowl. Remove giblets from chicken and reserve for another use. Loosen and lift the skin from the breast with your fingers and spread the butter mixture under it, starting at the neck end. Place lemon and garlic in the cavity. Tie the legs together with kitchen string. Place carrots, celery and onion in a large broiler-safe pot. Place the chicken breast-side up on the vegetables and put the lid on.
3. Roast the chicken for 1 hour. Increase oven temperature to broil. Uncover and broil until golden brown and a thermometer inserted in a thigh without touching bone registers 165°F, 6 to 10 minutes.
4. Transfer the chicken to a clean cutting board and let stand for 15 minutes before carving. Serve sprinkled with the remaining 1 tablespoon herbs and ½ teaspoon salt.

SERVES 6: ABOUT 3½ OUNCES (WITHOUT SKIN) EACH
CAL 247 FAT 11G (SAT 4G) CHOL 97MG CARBS 6G TOTAL SUGARS 3G (ADDED 0G) PROTEIN 29G FIBER 2G SODIUM 443MG POTASSIUM 433MG

THE MIGHTY BURGER

These burger recipes are bursting with flavor, and there's something from everyone—from beef to plant-based.

Korean Turkey Burgers with Kimchi

ACTIVE: 30 min TOTAL: 30 min

The spicy, fermented crunch of the cabbage and veggies in kimchi make it perfect in the pickle role on a burger, albeit with a touch more heat. Look for kimchi near other refrigerated Asian ingredients or near sauerkraut and pickles. You can find gochujang, a Korean chile paste that keeps these turkey burgers moist, with other Asian ingredients.

- 1 pound 93%-lean ground turkey
- 3 scallions, sliced
- 8 teaspoons gochujang, divided
- 1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
- 2 tablespoons low-fat mayonnaise
- 4 whole-wheat hamburger buns, toasted
- 12 slices English cucumber
- 1 cup kimchi

1. Preheat grill to medium-high.
2. Combine turkey, scallions, 5 teaspoons gochujang and sesame oil in a medium bowl; gently knead together. Do not overmix. Form into 4 burgers, about 4 inches wide.
3. Oil the grill rack. Grill the burgers until an instant-read thermometer inserted in the center registers 165°F, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Let rest for 5 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, combine mayonnaise and the remaining 3 teaspoons gochujang in a small bowl. Assemble the burgers on toasted buns with 2 teaspoons of the mayonnaise mixture, 3 slices cucumber and ¼ cup kimchi each.

SERVES 4: 1 BURGER EACH
CAL 341 FAT 12G (SAT 3G) CHOL 67MG
CARBS 33G TOTAL SUGARS 8G
(ADDED 7G) PROTEIN 28G FIBER 5G
SODIUM 782MG POTASSIUM 441MG

Turkish Lamb Pita Burgers

ACTIVE: 1 hr TOTAL: 1 hr
TO MAKE AHEAD: Cover and refrigerate yogurt sauce (Step 3) for up to 3 days.
EQUIPMENT: Spice grinder or mortar and pestle

A bold spice blend flavors this burger and the creamy sauce that tops it. We call for toasting whole coriander and cumin seeds for the biggest bang, but swap in ground (and don't toast) for a shortcut. The addition of lean turkey lightens up the lamb.

- ⅓ cup bulgur
- 1 cup boiling water
- 2 teaspoons whole coriander seeds
- 2 teaspoons whole cumin seeds
- ¾ cup nonfat plain Greek yogurt
- ¼ cup finely chopped scallion greens
- 4 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley, divided
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
- 1 teaspoon freshly grated lemon zest
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1½ teaspoons freshly ground pepper, divided
- 2 cups diced tomato
- ⅓ cup finely chopped red onion
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 12 ounces ground lamb
- 4 ounces 93%-lean ground turkey
- 1 cup finely chopped yellow onion
- 1 large egg
- 2 tablespoons chopped garlic
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground allspice
- Pinch of ground cinnamon
- 6 whole-wheat pita breads, warmed

1. Combine bulgur and boiling water in a small bowl; let stand until the water is absorbed and the bulgur is tender, 20 to 30 minutes. Drain any excess liquid.
2. Meanwhile, heat coriander and cumin seeds in a small skillet over medium heat until they begin to pop and are fragrant and lightly toasted, about 2 minutes. Scrape into a small bowl to cool, then crush in a mortar and pestle or spice grinder.
3. Combine 2 teaspoons of the spice mixture with yogurt, scallion greens, 2 tablespoons parsley, mint, oregano, lemon zest, lemon juice, sugar and ½ teaspoon pepper in a small bowl. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.
4. Combine tomato, red onion and oil in another small bowl.
5. Preheat broiler. Coat a broiler pan with cooking spray.
6. Place the reserved bulgur, the remaining spice mixture, the remaining 2 tablespoons parsley and the remaining 1 teaspoon pepper in a large bowl. Add lamb, turkey, yellow onion, egg, garlic, cayenne, salt, allspice and cinnamon. Gently combine, without overmixing, until evenly incorporated. Form into 12 equal balls, then form each into an oval patty about ½ inch thick.
7. Place the patties on the prepared broiler pan. Broil, turning once, until browned and an instant-read thermometer inserted in the center registers 165°F, 8 to 10 minutes total.
8. Slice open the warmed pita breads. Fill with 2 burgers, about ⅓ cup tomato mixture and 2 generous tablespoons yogurt sauce each.

SERVES 6: 1 PITA EACH
CAL 567 FAT 23G (SAT 7G) CHOL 84MG CARBS 64G TOTAL SUGARS 9G (ADDED 3G) PROTEIN 28G FIBER 11G SODIUM 648MG POTASSIUM 699MG

MAKE SURE TO SOFTEN THE CREAM CHEESE. OTHERWISE, IT WILL BE TOUGH TO COMBINE THE INGREDIENTS.

Jalapeño Popper Burgers

ACTIVE: 30 min TOTAL: 30 min

It's the meat we use here that makes this burger deluxe. Ground sirloin beef comes from the center loin cut. It has less connective tissue than regular ground beef for a super-tender patty.

- **3 ounces reduced-fat cream cheese, softened**
- **¾ cup shredded spicy cheese, such as chipotle Cheddar or pepper Jack**
- **1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and chopped**
- **1 pound ground sirloin**
- **⅛ teaspoon kosher salt**
- **4 whole-wheat hamburger buns**
- **¼ cup ketchup**
- **Lettuce, tomato & onion for serving (optional)**

1. Preheat grill to medium-high.
2. Combine cream cheese, shredded cheese and jalapeño in a medium bowl, stirring and mashing with a fork. Divide the mixture into 4 portions and form each into a 3-inch disk. Form sirloin into 4 patties about 4 inches wide and ½ inch thick. Season with salt.
3. Grill the burgers until almost done, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Place a cheese disk on each and continue cooking until an instant-read thermometer inserted in the thickest part of a burger registers 160°F and the cheese starts to melt, 1 to 2 minutes more. During the last few minutes, toast buns on the grill.
4. Top each burger with 1 tablespoon ketchup and serve on the buns with lettuce, tomato and onion, if desired.

SERVES 4: 1 BURGER EACH
CAL 458 FAT 23G (SAT 11G) CHOL 91MG CARBS 29G TOTAL SUGARS 9G (ADDED 6G) PROTEIN 33G FIBER 3G SODIUM 749MG POTASSIUM 590MG

MAKE IT A MEAL: SERVE WITH CUCUMBER SPEARS AND A GLASS OF GEWÜRZTRAMINER.

Mediterranean Portobello Burger

ACTIVE: 30 min TOTAL: 30 min

This sandwich has a killer garlicky flavor from a garlic-and-oil paste brushed onto the bread and mushrooms before grilling.

- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 4 portobello mushroom caps, stems and gills removed
- 4 large slices country-style sourdough bread, cut in half
- ½ cup sliced jarred roasted red peppers
- ½ cup chopped tomato
- ¼ cup crumbled reduced-fat feta cheese
- 2 tablespoons chopped pitted Kalamata olives
- 1 tablespoon red-wine vinegar
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- 2 cups loosely packed mixed baby salad greens

1. Preheat grill to medium-high.
2. Mash garlic and salt on a cutting board with the side of a knife until it's a smooth paste. Mix the paste with 1 tablespoon oil in a small dish. Lightly brush the oil mixture over portobellos and then on one side of each slice of bread.
3. Combine red peppers, tomato, feta, olives, vinegar, oregano and the remaining 1 tablespoon oil in a medium bowl.
4. Grill the mushroom caps until tender, about 4 minutes per side; grill the bread until crisp, about 1 minute per side.
5. Toss salad greens with the red pepper mixture. Place the grilled mushrooms top-side down on 4 half-slices of the bread. Top with the salad mixture and the remaining bread.

SERVES 4: 1 BURGER EACH
CAL 299 FAT 10G (SAT 2G) CHOL 3MG CARBS 40G TOTAL SUGARS 5G (ADDED 0G) PROTEIN 11G FIBER 4G SODIUM 790MG POTASSIUM 692MG

Chickpea & Beef Burgers with Whipped Feta

ACTIVE: 25 min TOTAL: 25 min

Chickpeas add fiber to this blended burger, but the real joy here is the light and flu y feta sauce that tops the whole shebang.

- 1 cup no-salt-added canned chickpeas, rinsed, divided
- 2 tablespoons water
- 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 12 ounces lean ground beef
- 1½ tablespoons chopped fresh mint
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
- ¾ teaspoon ground pepper
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- ⅔ cup crumbled feta cheese
- ½ cup low-fat plain Greek yogurt
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon zest
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 4 whole-wheat hamburger buns, toasted
- 4 leaves romaine lettuce, torn in half
- 1 medium red onion, sliced into ¼-inch rings
- 1 large tomato, sliced

1. Combine ½ cup chickpeas, water and 1 teaspoon oil in a mini food processor. Pulse until coarsely chopped. Transfer to a medium bowl and add the remaining ½ cup chickpeas, coarsely mashing with a fork. Add beef, mint, oregano, pepper and ¼ teaspoon salt; mix gently to combine. Form into four burgers, 3½ inches wide.

2. Heat the remaining 1 teaspoon oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add the burgers and cook, flipping once halfway, until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part registers 160°F, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Transfer to a plate, sprinkle with the remaining ¼ teaspoon salt and let rest for 5 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, combine feta and yogurt with lemon zest and lemon juice in a medium bowl. Beat with an electric mixer on medium-high until fluffy, about 1 minute. Serve the burgers on buns with the sauce, lettuce, onion and tomato.

SERVES 4: 1 BURGER EACH
CAL 492 FAT 20G (SAT 8G) CHOL 80MG CARBS 47G TOTAL SUGARS 12G (ADDED 0G) PROTEIN 33G FIBER 10G SODIUM 783MG POTASSIUM 1,116MG

WORK QUICKLY BUT GENTLY SO THAT THE PATTIES HOLD TOGETHER AS THEY COOK.

Salmon Burgers with Quick Pickles & Red Pepper Aioli

ACTIVE: 45 min TOTAL: 45 min

Here we make a quick aioli by combining two pantry staples: mayonnaise and roasted red peppers. Stirring a bit of the sauce into the burger mix helps the patties hold together nicely and stay moist.

- ¾ cup white-wine vinegar
- ¼ cup water
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill, divided
- 1 clove garlic, crushed, plus 1 clove grated, divided
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 medium English cucumber
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- ¼ cup finely chopped roasted red peppers
- 1¼ pounds salmon fillet, skin removed, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh chives
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 4 whole-wheat hamburger buns, split and toasted
- 1 cup baby arugula

1. Combine vinegar, water, 1 tablespoon dill, crushed garlic and salt in a small saucepan. Heat over medium-high heat until the salt dissolves, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat. Thinly slice cucumber into ribbons using a vegetable peeler. Stir the cucumber into the brine and set aside.
2. Combine mayonnaise, roasted red peppers and grated garlic in a small bowl and stir well. Transfer ¼ cup of the aioli to a large bowl and set the rest aside. Stir salmon, chives and the remaining 1 tablespoon dill into the aioli in the large bowl. Form the mixture into 4 patties about 4 inches in diameter.
3. Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add the patties and cook, flipping once, until golden and an instant-read thermometer inserted in the center registers 145°F, 6 to 8 minutes total.
4. Drain the pickles. Serve the burgers on buns with arugula, the remaining aioli and the pickles.

SERVES 4: 1 BURGER EACH
CAL 499 FAT 31G (SAT 6G) CHOL 78MG CARBS 23G
TOTAL SUGARS 4G (ADDED 0G) PROTEIN 34G
FIBER 5G SODIUM 588MG POTASSIUM 625MG

OFF THE HOOK

Make a delicious, protein-packed meal with these seafood dinner recipes.

BY JOEY ELENTERIO

Baked Salmon with Charred Onions & Old Bay Radishes

ACTIVE: 30 min TOTAL: 45 min

While farmed salmon historically has gotten a bad rap, many options now rate as Best Choice and Good Alternative by Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch program. Use wild Pacific salmon if you prefer (most comes from well-managed fisheries), but check for doneness a few minutes early, as it's typically leaner. The charred onion puree is both smoky and sweet, a nice foil for the simple salmon.

- 2 medium onions, sliced ½ inch thick
- 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- Zest of 2 lemons
- 1½ teaspoons cracked pepper
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- 4 5-ounce skin-on salmon fillets
- 6 large radishes, cut into wedges, plus more thinly sliced for garnish
- 1 teaspoon Old Bay Seasoning
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- Fresh cilantro & flaky sea salt for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 325°F.
2. Heat a large cast-iron skillet over high heat. Add onions and cook, pressing down occasionally, until completely charred on one side, 10 to 15 minutes. Turn and cook, pressing down occasionally, until charred on the second side, 8 to 10 minutes more. Transfer to a large bowl and cover tightly. Let steam for 15 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, mix 2 tablespoons oil, lemon zest, pepper and ½ teaspoon salt in a small bowl. Add 1 tablespoon oil to a medium ovenproof nonstick or cast-iron skillet and add salmon, skin-side down. Spread the lemon zest mixture on the salmon. Bake until just cooked through, 14 to 16 minutes.
4. Bring a small saucepan of water to a boil. Add radish wedges and cook until just tender, 5 to 6 minutes. Drain and pat dry. Dry the pan and add the remaining 1 tablespoon oil and Old Bay. Heat over medium heat until sizzling, about 1 minute. Remove from heat and stir in the radish wedges. Cover and keep warm.
5. Combine the onions, the remaining ½ teaspoon salt and sugar in a food processor; puree until smooth.
6. Serve the salmon with the onion puree and radishes. Garnish with sliced radishes, cilantro and flaky salt, if desired.

SERVES 4: 4 OZ. SALMON, 2 TBSP. ONION PUREE & ¼ CUP RADISHES EACH
CAL 324 FAT 19G (SAT 3G) CHOL 66MG
CARBS 7G TOTAL SUGARS 3G (ADDED 1G)
PROTEIN 29G FIBER 2G SODIUM 718MG
POTASSIUM 653MG

Black Bass with Sautéed Vegetables & Cioppino Jus

ACTIVE: 1 hr TOTAL: 2½ hrs

TO MAKE AHEAD: *Refrigerate jus (Steps 1-5) for up to 1 day or freeze for up to 1 month.*

Black bass has a delicate flavor that begs to be paired with something bold, like this cioppino-inspired jus. The jus takes some time to make, but we promise it's worth it. You'll have some left over: do as our editor-in-chief did and try it as a bloody mary base. Or use it to make a seafood stew.

- 1 pound unpeeled, head-on raw shrimp
- 4 tablespoons canola oil, divided
- cup chopped onion
- 3 cloves garlic, smashed
- 1 cup chopped fennel
- ½ cup chopped carrot
- ½ cup chopped celery
- cup tomato paste
- ½ cup Pernod or other pastis plus 2 tablespoons, divided
- 8 cups water
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 1 teaspoon whole peppercorns
- ¾ teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- 1 medium yellow squash, diced
- 1 medium zucchini, diced
- 15 cherry tomatoes, halved
- 2 tablespoons butter, divided
- 1 teaspoon ground pepper
- 4 5-ounce skin-on black bass or cod fillets
- Chopped fennel fronds, fresh tarragon, lemon zest & fennel pollen for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat a 9-by-13-inch baking pan with cooking spray.

2. Twist heads o shrimp and place the heads in the prepared pan. Pull o and discard legs. Peel and devein the shrimp; set the shrimp aside in the refrigerator and add the shells to the pan. Roast the heads and shells until pink and crispy, about 15 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, heat 1½ tablespoons oil in a large pot over medium-low heat. Add onion and garlic and cook, stirring occasionally, until translucent, about 5 minutes. Add fennel, carrot and celery and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 8 minutes. Add tomato paste and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add ½ cup Pernod (or other pastis) and cook, stirring, until the liquid has evaporated, about 1 minute.

4. Add water, bay leaf, thyme, crushed red pepper, peppercorns, the roasted heads and shells and the reserved shrimp. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to maintain a lively simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until reduced to 6 cups, 1 to 1½ hours.

5. Discard the bay leaf. Transfer the mixture to a blender in batches and blend until smooth (be careful when blending hot liquids). Pour through a fine-mesh sieve into a large saucepan, pressing on the solids to get as much liquid as possible. (You should have about 4 cups of cioppino jus.) Season with ½ teaspoon salt. Cover to keep warm.

6. Heat 1½ tablespoons oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add squash and zucchini and cook, stirring occasionally, until starting to brown, 10 to 12 minutes. Stir in tomatoes, then the remaining 2 tablespoons Pernod (or other pastis), scraping up any browned bits. Stir in 1 tablespoon butter and pepper. Cover to keep warm.

7. Pat fish dry with paper towels and sprinkle with the remaining ¼ teaspoon salt. Heat the remaining 1 tablespoon oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add the fish, skin-side down. Cook, pressing gently with a spatula, until the skin is crispy, about 5 minutes. Turn the fish and add the remaining 1 tablespoon butter. Cook, basting with the butter, until the fish is just cooked through, 3 to 5 minutes more.

8. Divide the vegetables among 4 shallow bowls and top each with a piece of fish. Pour ¼ cup cioppino jus around the vegetables. (Reserve the remaining jus for another use.) Garnish with fennel fronds, tarragon, lemon zest and fennel pollen, if desired.

SERVES 4: 4 OZ. FISH, ½ CUP VEGETABLES & ¼ CUP JUS EACH
CAL 475 FAT 18G (SAT 5G) CHOL 117MG
CARBS 15G TOTAL SUGARS 11G
(ADDED 0G) PROTEIN 35G FIBER 3G
SODIUM 614MG POTASSIUM 973MG

Steelhead Trout with Creamy Barley & Herb Salad

ACTIVE: 45 min TOTAL: 1¼ hrs
EQUIPMENT: Cheesecloth, kitchen string

Steelhead and rainbow trout are the same species, but steelhead are anadromous, meaning that, like salmon, they migrate from the ocean to freshwater to spawn. Salmon and arctic char are a good substitute if you have trouble finding steelhead. The creamy barley the fish is served with has a texture similar to risotto, and toasting the grains before cooking gives the dish a nutty flavor. A knob of fresh horseradish is worth seeking out for this; its flavor is more nuanced than jarred.

- **2 tablespoons chopped leek plus ⅔ cup finely diced leek top, divided**
- **1 tablespoon chopped carrot plus ½ cup finely diced, divided**
- **1 tablespoon chopped celery**
- **2 cloves garlic, crushed, divided**
- **1 fresh parsley stem plus ½ cup parsley leaves, divided**
- **⅛ bay leaf plus 1 whole bay leaf, divided**
- **⅛ teaspoon whole peppercorns**
- **5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided**
- **1 cup pearl barley**
- **4 cups water**
- **4 cups unsalted chicken broth**
- **½ lemon**
- **½ cinnamon stick**
- **½ cup finely diced peeled turnip**
- **2 tablespoons butter, divided**
- **2 tablespoons sliced fresh chives plus 1 cup 1½-inch pieces**
- **2 tablespoons grated peeled fresh horseradish**
- **1 teaspoon kosher salt, divided**
- **4 5-ounce skinned steelhead trout fillets**
- **1½ teaspoons cracked pepper**
- **2 sprigs fresh thyme**
- **2 tablespoons fresh tarragon leaves**
- **1 tablespoon fresh chervil leaves**

1. Place chopped leek, chopped carrot, celery, 1 garlic clove, parsley stem, ⅛ bay leaf and peppercorns on a double layer of cheesecloth. Bundle up and tie with kitchen string to create a sachet. Gently smash the sachet to release some of the aromas. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add barley and cook, stirring, until toasted, 1 to 3 minutes. Add water and the sachet. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce to a simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until the water is mostly absorbed and the barley is tender and creamy, 35 to 40 minutes. Discard the sachet.
2. Meanwhile, combine broth, lemon, cinnamon stick and the remaining whole bay leaf in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to maintain a lively simmer and cook until reduced to 2½ cups, 20 to 25 minutes. Strain (discard solids). Cover to keep warm.
3. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large nonstick skillet. Add turnip and the remaining diced leek top and carrot; cook, stirring, until just tender, about 1 minute. Stir the vegetables into the barley along with 1 tablespoon butter, sliced chives, horseradish and ½ teaspoon salt. Cover to keep warm. Wipe out the skillet.
4. Sprinkle trout with cracked pepper and the remaining ½ teaspoon salt. Heat 1½ tablespoons oil in the skillet over medium-low heat. Add the trout and cook for 8 minutes. Turn the trout and add the remaining 1 tablespoon butter, 1 garlic clove and thyme. Cook, basting once or twice with the butter mixture, until the fish flakes with a fork, about 6 minutes more.
5. To serve, combine the remaining parsley leaves, chive pieces, tarragon and chervil in a small bowl. Divide the barley among 4 bowls. Top each with a piece of trout and some of the herbs. Pour ⅔ cup of the warm broth around the barley. Sprinkle with more herbs and drizzle with the remaining ½ tablespoon oil.

SERVES 4: 4 OZ. FISH, 1 CUP BARLEY, ⅔ CUP BROTH & ½ CUP HERBS EACH
CAL 646 FAT 33G (SAT 8G) CHOL 96MG CARBS 48G TOTAL SUGARS 4G (ADDED 0G) PROTEIN 39G FIBER 10G SODIUM 752MG POTASSIUM 1,020MG

6 EASY HIGH-PROTEIN DINNERS

By prepping these healthy meals ahead of time, you can breeze through the week.

VICTORIA SEAVER, M.S., R.D.

Eating meals you enjoy is key to keeping up with healthy eating, and these high-protein dinners deliver. Start with Sunday's Dijon Salmon with Green Bean Pilaf, which clocks in at 32 grams of protein per serving. The salmon gets topped with a garlicky-mustard mix and the lemon-and-parsley-flavored green-bean pilaf completes this yummy meal. Wednesday's Spicy Jerk Shrimp is packed with flavor from a spicy seasoning blend, plus pineapple, cilantro and lime. And the Spicy Noodles with Pork, Scallions & Bok Choy recipe—which gets tons of flavor from ginger, chili sauce and scallions—caps off this week of delicious, satisfying dinners.

To make these meals even easier, try these extra shortcuts:

- Skip soaking dried chickpeas for Monday's Slow-Cooker Mediterranean Chicken & Chickpea Soup recipe and instead use 3 cans of chickpeas.
- For Tuesday's Spaghetti Squash Lasagna with Broccolini recipe, microwave the squash rather than baking it to save time.
- Buy peeled, deveined shrimp and a peeled and cored pineapple for Wednesday's Spicy Jerk Shrimp rather than doing that prep yourself.

1 | SUNDAY

Dijon Salmon with Green Bean Pilaf

TOTAL: 30 min

In this quick dinner recipe, the delicious garlicky-mustardy mayo that tops baked salmon is very versatile. Make extra to use as a dip for fries or to jazz up tuna salad. Precooked brown rice helps get this healthy dinner on the table fast, but if you have other leftover whole grains, such as quinoa or farro, they work well here too

- 1¼ pounds wild salmon, skinned and cut into 4 portions
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 2 teaspoons whole-grain mustard
- ½ teaspoon ground pepper, divided
- 12 ounces pretrimmed haricots verts or thin green beans, cut into thirds
- 1 small lemon, zested and cut into 4 wedges
- 2 tablespoons pine nuts
- 1 8-ounce package precooked brown rice
- 2 tablespoons water
- Chopped fresh parsley for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 425°F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil or parchment paper.
2. Brush salmon with 1 tablespoon oil and place on the prepared baking sheet. Mash garlic and salt into a paste with the side of a chef's knife or a fork. Combine a scant 1 teaspoon of the garlic paste in a small bowl with mayonnaise, mustard and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Spread the mixture on top of the fish.
3. Roast the salmon until it flakes easily with a fork in the thickest part, 6 to 8 minutes per inch of thickness.
4. Meanwhile, heat the remaining 2 tablespoons oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add green beans, lemon zest, pine nuts, the remaining garlic paste and ¼ teaspoon pepper; cook, stirring, until the beans are just tender, 2 to 4 minutes. Reduce heat to medium. Add rice and water and cook, stirring, until hot, 2 to 3 minutes more.
5. Sprinkle the salmon with parsley, if desired, and serve with the green bean pilaf and lemon wedges.

SERVES 4: 4 OZ. FISH & 1 CUP PILAF EACH
CAL 442 FAT 25G (SAT 4G)
CHOL 69MG CARBS 22G TOTAL SUGARS 2G (ADDED 0G) PROTEIN 32G
FIBER 4G SODIUM 605MG
POTASSIUM 706MG

+

KEEP PRE-PORTIONED PACKAGES OF FISH IN THE FREEZER. THAW AS NEEDED IN THE FRIDGE OVERNIGHT.

2 | MONDAY

Slow-Cooker Mediterranean Chicken & Chickpea Soup

ACTIVE: 20 min
TOTAL: 4 hrs 20 min

This set-it-and-forget-it slow-cooker recipe simmers away all day so you come home to a warm and healthy dinner the whole family will love. Using bone-in chicken is the key to making rich soup without adding broth.

- 1½ cups dried chickpeas, soaked overnight
- 4 cups water
- 1 large yellow onion, finely chopped
- 1 15-ounce can no-salt-added diced tomatoes, preferably fire-roasted
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 bay leaf
- 4 teaspoons ground cumin
- 4 teaspoons paprika
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ¼ teaspoon ground pepper
- 2 pounds bone-in chicken thighs, skin removed, trimmed
- 1 14-ounce can artichoke hearts, drained and quartered
- ¼ cup halved pitted oil-cured olives
- ½ teaspoon salt

1. Drain chickpeas and place in a 6-quart or larger slow cooker. Add 4 cups water, onion, tomatoes and their juice, tomato paste, garlic, bay leaf, cumin, paprika, cayenne and ground pepper; stir to combine. Add chicken.
2. Cover and cook on Low for 8 hours or High for 4 hours.
3. Transfer the chicken to a clean cutting board and let cool slightly. Discard bay leaf. Add artichokes, olives and salt to the slow cooker and stir to combine. Shred the chicken, discarding bones. Stir the chicken into the soup. Serve topped with parsley (or cilantro).

SERVES 6: ABOUT 2 CUPS EACH
CAL 447 FAT 15G (SAT 3G) CHOL 77MG
CARBS 43G TOTAL SUGARS 9G
(ADDED 0G) PROTEIN 34G FIBER 12G
SODIUM 762MG POTASSIUM 609MG

3 | TUESDAY

Spaghetti Squash Lasagna with Broccolini

TOTAL: 40 min

In this low-carb spaghetti squash lasagna recipe, garlicky broccolini, spaghetti squash and cheese are combined for a healthy take on a favorite casserole. This bakes right in the squash shells for a fun presentation. Serve with a big Caesar salad and some warm and crusty whole-grain bread.

- **1 spaghetti squash (2½ to 3 pounds), halved lengthwise and seeded**
- **1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil**
- **1 bunch broccolini, chopped**
- **4 cloves garlic, minced**
- **¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper (optional)**
- **2 tablespoons water**
- **1 cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese, divided**
- **¼ cup shredded Parmesan cheese, divided**
- **¾ teaspoon Italian seasoning**
- **½ teaspoon salt**
- **¼ teaspoon ground pepper**

1. Position racks in upper and lower thirds of oven; preheat to 450°F.
2. Place squash cut-side down in a microwave-safe dish; add 2 tablespoons water. Microwave, uncovered, on High until the flesh is tender, about 10 minutes. *(Alternatively, place squash halves cut-side down on a rimmed baking sheet. Bake in a 400°F oven until the squash is tender, 40 to 50 minutes.)*
3. Meanwhile, heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add broccolini, garlic and red pepper (if using); cook, stirring frequently, for 2 minutes. Add water and cook, stirring, until the broccolini is tender, 3 to 5 minutes more. Transfer to a large bowl.
4. Use a fork to scrape the squash from the shells into the bowl. Place the shells in a broiler-safe baking pan or on a baking sheet. Stir ¾ cup mozzarella, 2 tablespoons Parmesan, Italian seasoning, salt and pepper into the squash mixture. Divide it between the shells; top with the remaining ¼ cup mozzarella and 2 tablespoons Parmesan.
5. Bake on the lower rack for 10 minutes. Move to the upper rack, turn the broiler to high and broil, watching carefully, until the cheese starts to brown, about 2 minutes.

SERVES 4: ½ STUFFED SQUASH HALF EACH
CAL 194 FAT 11G (SAT 5G) CHOL 23MG
CARBS 15G TOTAL SUGARS 5G (ADDED 0G)
PROTEIN 11G FIBER 2G SODIUM 609MG
POTASSIUM 347MG

4 | WEDNESDAY

Spicy Jerk Shrimp over Cooked Brown Rice

ACTIVE: 5 min TOTAL: 50 min

The pineapple in this recipe makes a sweet sauce that balances the heat of the Jamaican jerk seasoning.

- 1½ pounds fresh or frozen large shrimp in shells
- 4 (¼ inch thick) slices peeled and cored fresh pineapple, halved
- 2 cups bite-size strips red sweet pepper
- 2 cups sliced red onions
- 1 fresh jalapeño chile pepper, halved lengthwise, seeded and sliced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon Jamaican jerk seasoning
- ½ cup coarsely snipped fresh cilantro
- 1 cups hot cooked brown rice
- Lime wedges

1. Thaw shrimp, if frozen. Preheat oven to 425° F. Line two 15-by-10-inch baking pans with foil.
2. Peel and devein shrimp, leaving tails intact, if desired. Rinse shrimp; pat dry. Combine shrimp and the next six ingredients (through jerk seasoning) in an extra-large bowl; toss gently to coat. Divide mixture between the prepared pans. Roast 15 minutes or until shrimp are opaque.
3. Sprinkle with cilantro and serve with brown rice and lime wedges.

SERVES 4: 5 OZ. SHRIMP AND 1 CUP PINEAPPLE MIXTURE EACH
CAL 351 FAT 9G (SAT 1G) CHOL 238MG CARBS 37G TOTAL SUGARS 12G (ADDED 0G) PROTEIN 34G FIBER 5G SODIUM 411MG POTASSIUM 787MG

5 | THURSDAY

Chipotle Chicken Quinoa Burrito Bowl

ACTIVE: 30 min
TOTAL: 30 min

This chipotle-flavored burrito bowl recipe is even better than takeout and just as fast. Loading it with vegetables and using quinoa in place of rice adds nutrition for a healthy dinner.

- 1 tablespoon finely chopped chipotle peppers in adobo sauce
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breast
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 cups cooked quinoa
- 2 cups shredded romaine lettuce
- 1 cup canned pinto beans, rinsed
- 1 ripe avocado, diced
- ¼ cup prepared pico de gallo or other salsa
- ¼ cup shredded Cheddar or Monterey Jack cheese
- Lime wedges for serving

1. Preheat grill to medium-high or preheat broiler.
2. Combine chipotles, oil, garlic powder and cumin in a small bowl.
3. Oil the grill rack or a rimmed baking sheet, if broiling. Season chicken with salt. Grill the chicken for 5 minutes or broil it on the prepared baking sheet for 9 minutes. Turn, brush with the chipotle glaze and continue cooking until an instant-read thermometer inserted in the thickest part registers 165°F, 3 to 5 minutes more on the grill or 9 minutes more under the broiler. Transfer to a clean cutting board. Chop into bite-size pieces.
4. Assemble each burrito bowl with ½ cup quinoa, ½ cup chicken, ½ cup lettuce, ¼ cup beans, ¼ avocado, 1 tablespoon pico de gallo (or other salsa) and 1 tablespoon cheese. Serve with a lime wedge.

SERVES 4: 1 BURRITO BOWL, ABOUT 2½ CUPS EACH
CAL 452 FAT 19G (SAT 4G) CHOL 90MG CARBS 36G TOTAL SUGARS 3G (ADDED 0G) PROTEIN 36G FIBER 9G SODIUM 462MG POTASSIUM 995MG

CHILI-BEAN SAUCE, A CONDIMENT POPULAR IN SICHUAN COOKING, IS MADE FROM RED CHILES AND FERMENTED SOYBEANS AND BROAD BEANS.

6 | FRIDAY

Spicy Noodles with Pork, Scallions & Bok Choy

ACTIVE: 35 min TOTAL: 35 min

These spicy noodles are inspired by a Chinese dish called Ants Climbing a Tree, named for the way the small pieces of ground pork (the "ants") cling to the noodles (the "tree"). The twist in these healthy noodles comes from adding vegetables like scallions and bok choy.

- 7 ounces thin rice noodles or rice sticks
- 2 tablespoons canola oil, divided
- 1 head bok choy (about 1 pound), chopped, greens and whites separated
- 3 scallions, sliced, greens and whites separated
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh ginger
- ¼ cup chili-bean sauce or chile-garlic sauce
- 1 pound ground pork
- 2 cups unsalted chicken broth
- 3 tablespoons reduced-sodium tamari or soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon white sugar
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1 tablespoon water
- Crushed red pepper for garnish

1. Cook noodles according to package directions. Drain and rinse under cold water. Set aside.
2. Meanwhile, heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large flat-bottomed wok or cast-iron skillet over high heat. Add bok choy whites and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add bok choy greens and cook until wilted, about 1 minute more. Transfer all the bok choy to a medium bowl.
3. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon oil, scallion whites, ginger and chili-bean sauce (or chile-garlic sauce) to the pan. Add pork and cook, crumbling with a wooden spoon, until no longer pink, 3 to 5 minutes. Add broth, tamari (or soy sauce) and sugar. Mix cornstarch and water in a small bowl and add to the pan. Bring to a boil and cook, stirring, until slightly thickened, about 1 minute. Stir in the reserved noodles and bok choy; cook, stirring, until heated through, about 1 minute. Serve topped with scallion greens and crushed red pepper, if desired.

SERVES 6: 1⅓ CUPS EACH
CAL 311 FAT 9G (SAT 2G) CHOL 44MG
CARBS 39G TOTAL SUGARS 4G (ADDED 1G)
PROTEIN 20G FIBER 3G SODIUM 609MG
POTASSIUM 581MG

BIG-BATCH | LUNCH

Greek Meatball Mezze Bowls

ACTIVE: 35 min TOTAL: 35 mins

If you want a satisfying lunch idea for this week, look no further. These Mediterranean-inspired Greek Meatball Mezze Bowls have a whopping 32 grams of protein per serving. Make them at the beginning of the week and pop them in the fridge so they're ready to eat when you are. Look for premade tzatziki near the specialty cheeses and dips at your grocery store.

- **1 cup frozen chopped spinach, thawed**
- **1 pound 93%-lean ground turkey**
- **½ cup crumbled feta cheese**
- **½ teaspoon garlic powder**
- **½ teaspoon dried oregano**
- **⅜ teaspoon salt, divided**
- **⅜ teaspoon ground pepper, divided**
- **2 cups cooked quinoa, cooled** *(see recipe at right)*
- **2 tablespoons lemon juice**
- **1 tablespoon olive oil**
- **½ cup chopped parsley**
- **3 tablespoons chopped mint**
- **2 cups sliced cucumber**
- **1 pint cherry tomatoes**
- **¼ cup tzatziki**

1. Squeeze excess moisture from spinach. Combine the spinach with turkey, feta, garlic powder, oregano, ⅛ teaspoon salt and ⅛ teaspoon pepper in a medium bowl; mix well. Form the mixture into 12 meatballs. Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Coat with cooking spray. Working in batches if necessary, add the meatballs to the pan and cook until browned on all sides and no longer pink in the center, about 10 to 12 minutes. (An instant-read thermometer inserted in the center should register 165°F.) Set the meatballs aside to cool.
2. Combine quinoa, lemon juice, oil, parsley, mint and the remaining ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper in a medium bowl. Divide among 4 single-serving lidded containers. Top each with 3 meatballs, ½ cup cucumbers and ½ cup cherry tomatoes.
3. Seal the containers and refrigerate for up to 4 days. Divide tzatziki among 4 small containers and refrigerate.
4. Before serving, transfer the meatballs to a microwave-safe container and heat until steaming. Return to the original container and serve with tzatziki.

SERVES 4: 2½ CUPS EACH
CAL 392 FAT 17G (SAT 6G) CHOL 83MG
CARBS 29G TOTAL SUGARS 5G
(ADDED 0G) PROTEIN 32G FIBER 6G
SODIUM 543MG POTASSIUM 919MG

Basic Quinoa

ACTIVE: 5 min TOTAL: 30 min
SERVES 6

- **2 cups water or broth**
- **1 cup quinoa**

Combine water (or broth) and quinoa in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer until tender and most of the liquid has been absorbed, 15 to 20 minutes. Fluff with a fork.

EatingWell

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Power Up Your Salads

Salads are a great way to eat more veggies, but greens alone do not make a satisfying meal. Protein-rich foods like chicken, eggs and chickpeas can boost even the simplest base of leafy greens. Protein helps build muscles and sticks around long after you've eaten to help you feel full and energized. High-protein diets have been linked to lower BMIs and smaller waists. Start with some greens, sprinkle in chopped veggies for color and crunch, add protein, some whole grains and salad dressing, and you're good to go.

YOU'D SHARE YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER BEFORE YOUR BBQ SECRETS.

WE'VE GOT A SNACK FOR PEOPLE LIKE YOU.

Hearty and Healthy

From your muscles to your hair, protein is the glue that holds your body together. Here are the most healthful and delicious sources. Plus: How to determine the optimal amount for you.